THE American Scholar

AUTUMN 1975 Price $1.75

PAUL A. FREUND
The Great Disorder of Speech

DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN
Presenting the American Case

RICHARD H. ROVERE
Walter Lippmann

SONYA RUDIKOFF
Popular Culture All Around Us

NICOLAS NABOKOV
Days with Diaghilev

HARRY SCHEIBER
Black is Computable

Boutique America!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Photograph by Michael V. Carlisle

ROBERT PENN WARREN

DEMOCRACY AND POETRY

Here is Robert Penn Warren writing on the state of the arts. And arts of the state.

"I am going to make some very sweeping generalizations here about everything from the history of science to the role of poetry, with flag stops at way stations such as human nature in general and the fate of the Western World . . . what I want to do is return us to a scrutiny of our own experience of our own world."

He does so, beautifully. With the unique sensibility of a poet.

$5.95

Harvard University Press

Cambridge, Mass. 02138

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The most complete and most scholarly dictionary of the English language"

—The Christian Science Monitor

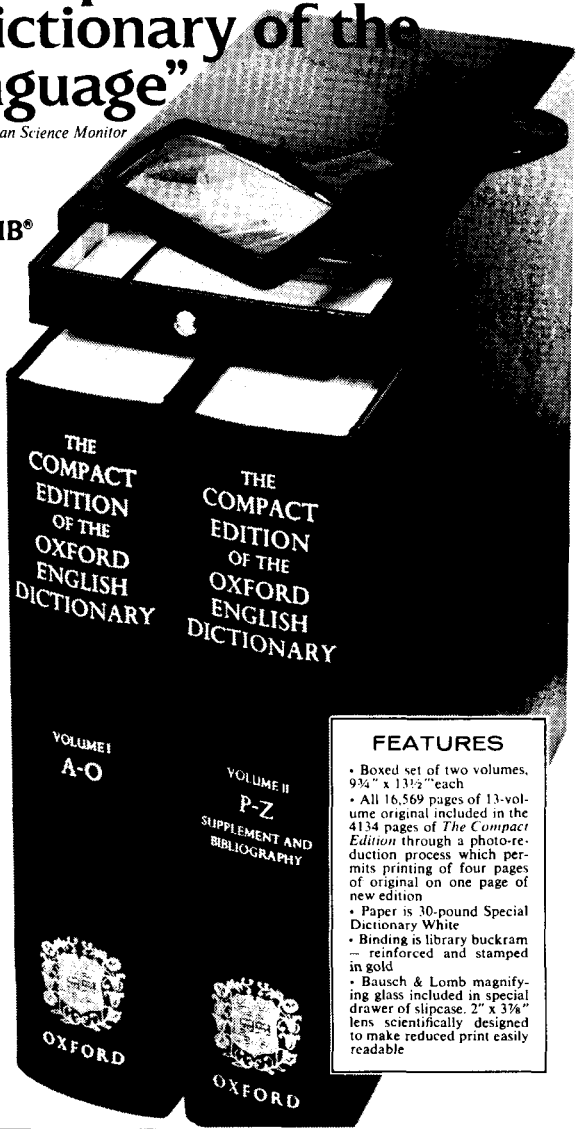
As an introduction to membership in the

BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB®

yours for only

$17.50 [Publisher's list price $90]

THE SUGGESTED TRIAL: You simply agree to buy four Club choices within a year at substantial savings on most books you choose.



THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY is generally regarded as the final arbiter of the English language. Until recently it has been available only as a thirteen-volume set, currently priced at $350. Now, through the combination of an ingenious method of micrographic reproduction and a fine Bausch & Lomb optical lens, every single one of its 16,569 pages, fifty million words and close to two million illustrative quotations appears, in easily readable form, in *The Compact Edition.*

The *New York Times* book critic Christopher Lehmann-Haupt has said of this edition: "It is something of a miracle.... *The Compact Edition* is easier to work with than the original with its 13 separate volumes."

Even more extraordinary, as a trial member of the Book-of-the-Month Club you may obtain the two-volume set for only $17.50. And as long as you remain a member, you will receive the Book-of-the-Month Club *News,* a literary magazine announcing the coming Selection and describing other important books, most of which are available at substantial discounts – up to **40%** on more expensive volumes. All of these books **are identical to the publishers' editions in content, format, size and quality.**

If you continue after your trial membership, you will earn at least one Book-Dividend® Credit for every Selection or Alternate you buy. These Credits entitle you to obtain a wide variety of books, called Book-Dividends at astonishing savings – *at least 70% of publishers' list prices.*

FEATURES

- Boxed set of two volumes, 9¾" x 13½"each
- All 16,569 pages of 13-volume original included in the 4134 pages of *The Compact Edition* through a photo-reduction process which permits printing of four pages of original on one page of new edition
- Paper is 30-pound Special Dictionary White
- Binding is library buckram – reinforced and stamped in gold
- Bausch & Lomb magnifying glass included in special drawer of slipcase. 2" x 3⅜" lens scientifically designed to make reduced print easily readable

FACTS ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

- You will receive the Book-of-the-Month Club *News,* a literary magazine published by the Club fifteen times a year. The *News* describes the coming Selection and scores of Alternates, and will be sent to you approximately every three and a half weeks.
- If you wish to purchase the Selection, do nothing and it will be shipped to you automatically.
- If you do not want the Selection – or you would like one of the Alternates, or no book at all – simply indicate your decision on the reply form always enclosed with the *News* and mail it so we receive it by the date specified.
- If, because of late mail delivery of the *News,* you should receive a Selection without having had 10 days to decide whether you want it, that Selection may be returned at Club expense.

Book-of-the-Month Club, Inc., Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17012 **5-A256-10**

Please enroll me as a member of the Book-of-the-Month Club and send me *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary,* billing me $17.50 (in Canada $19 – publisher's price $99). I agree to buy at least four Selections or Alternates during the first year I am a member, paying in most cases special members' prices. My membership is cancelable any time after I buy these four books. A shipping charge is added to all shipments.

MR. / MRS. / MISS { ..... (Please print plainly)

Address **53**

City .....

State ..... *Zip* .....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Morality of Consent

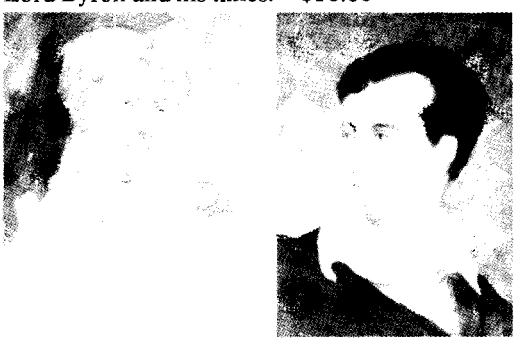
Alexander M. Bickel

A brilliant American legal philosopher—in the tradition of Edmund Burke—presents a bold and controversial challenge to liberals and conservatives to reexamine the American system of political thought and process. $10.00

Byron and the Honourable Augusta Leigh

John S. Chapman

A challenge to the consensus on the question of incest between Byron and his half sister Augusta, this book reviews all the available evidence. John Chapman makes biographical detective work the basis for a shrewd and lively commentary on Lord Byron and his times. $10.00



Tennyson's Major Poems

The Comic and Ironic Patterns

James R. Kincaid

This book suggests a new course for Tennyson criticism, a unitary approach through genre. Mr. Kincaid finds in the narrative patterns of comedy and irony both a shape for the development of Tennyson's career and a means of identifying the major poetry. $15.00

Twentieth-Century Russian Literary Criticism

Victor Erlich, editor

The vitality and diversity of modern Russian literary criticism are manifest in this volume's seventeen essays, most of which appear here in English for the first time. $15.00

The Puritan Origins of the American Self

Sacvan Bercovitch

Mr. Bercovitch's subject is the development of the concept of American identity; his method is comparatist, to specify the uniqueness of that development; and his discussion, centering upon the interaction of language, myth, and society, explores the Puritan achievement in its broadest cultural context. $15.00

The Poetry of Meng Chiao and Han Yü

Stephen Owen

This study of the poetry of Han Yü (768-824) and Meng Chiao (751-814), two notable literary figures of the T'ang Dynasty, is a significant achievement in the application of modern Western critical methods to a body of Chinese poems. $15.00

Childhood in China

William Kessen, editor

Thirteen American experts in child development describe the lives of Chinese children at home, in nurseries, and at school. Filled with the kind of detail that only people trained in observing children can offer, this comprehensive volume successfully communicates what it must be like to be a child growing up in the People's Republic of China.

A Yale Fastback 16

Illus. Cloth $12.50 Paper $3.95

Anthology of Poems on Affairs of State

Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660–1714

George deF. Lord, editor

Here at last is the long-awaited and lively selection from the authoritative seven-volume Yale edition of *Poems on Affairs of State*. It provides both the general reader and the student of English literature and history with a full and coherent account of many aspects of a rich and crucial period in England's development.

Illus. Cloth $35.00 Paper $6.95

Yale

Yale University Press
New Haven and London

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE

American Scholar

A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

PUBLISHED FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION BY PHI BETA KAPPA

In the right state the scholar is *Man Thinking*
—EMERSON

EDITORIAL BOARD

JACQUES BARZUN
KENNETH B. CLARK
PETER GAY
OWEN GINGERICH
LILLIAN HELLMAN
ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE
KENNETH KENISTON

MARTIN KILSON
HILTON KRAMER
ISABEL MACCAFFREY
ROBERT NISBET
SAUNDERS REDDING
EDWARD SHILS
WILLIAM STYRON

DIANA TRILLING

JOSEPH EPSTEIN, *Editor*
JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN, *Consulting Editor*
RENÉ DUBOS, *Contributing Editor*
DANIELLE DUBAS, *Associate Editor*
JEAN E. JONES, *Assistant Editor*
MARY ELINORE SMITH, *Editorial Assistant*

DOROTHY KERR, *Director of Circulation and Promotion*
CARLEY STRAUGHAN

Advertising Representative: KERR & ASSOCIATES, 1211 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 604, Washington, D. C. 20036. Telephone: 202-296-1478.

Published quarterly since 1932 by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa, 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Second-class postage paid at Washington, D.C. and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1975 by the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa.

Send all change of address notices, undeliverable copies subscription orders and other mail to *Editorial and Circulation Offices:* 1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Subscription Rates: $1.75 a copy, $6.50 one year, $11.00 two years, $15.00 three years, foreign and Canadian $.75 a year additional for postage.

Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by return postage. No responsibility is assumed for their loss or injury, or for the views expressed in articles published.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cornell University Press

A book as intriguing as *The Human Zoo,* as immediate as a Jacques Cousteau special—

Mountain Sheep and Man in the Northern Wilds

By VALERIUS GEIST. A renowned scientist, sensitive observer, and natural storyteller here recounts his experiences with the magnificent bighorned sheep of the Canadian wilderness. The book is popular science in the best sense—beautifully written, scrupulously accurate, innovative, thought-provoking—and it is illustrated with splendid photographs taken by the author. Combining the excitement of discovery with sound scientific principles, Mr. Geist affirms the essential unity of man with nature and clarifies the values that will help our species to survive and thrive. *Illustrated.* $10.00

The Case Against Direct Election of the President

A Defense of the Electoral College

By JUDITH BEST. One firm vote of confidence is cast here for our present system of electing the president. Describing the electoral system within the context of American government and politics, Ms. Best asserts that its faults —great as they may be—are far outweighed by its virtues, and she explains point by point her reasons for rejecting various criticisms made by proponents of direct election. "Intriguing... lively and concrete."
—*Kirkus Reviews* $9.95

Sex and Marriage in Victorian Poetry

By WENDELL STACY JOHNSON. Contradicting the standard notion that Victorians were prudish and hypocritical, this engaging work is concerned with how poets viewed sexual drives and frustrations, sexual roles, and sexual relations in and out of marriage. Mr. Johnson's deft and timely study argues that marriage is a central theme in Victorian poetry with important social ramifications and deep symbolic significance. $12.50

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS ITHACA AND LONDON

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

Volume 44 *Autumn, 1975* Number 4

CONTENTS

THE DESPAIRING OPTIMIST	*René Dubos*	528
LIFE AND LETTERS		
Boutique America!	*Aristides*	533
The Great Disorder of Speech	*Paul A. Freund*	541
Death in a Strange Land, *Poem*	*D. J. Enright*	560
Presenting the American Case	*Daniel P. Moynihan*	564
News from the Underworld, *Poem*	*John Updike*	584
Walter Lippmann	*Richard H. Rovere*	585
Popular Culture All Around Us	*Sonya Rudikoff*	604
Dust, *Poem*	*Susan Snively*	618
Days with Diaghilev	*Nicolas Nabokov*	620
TEACHING		
Leo Strauss: Becoming Naïve Again	*Werner J. Dannhauser*	636
Hands, *Poem*	*Greg Kuzma*	642
TRAVEL		
A Little Tour with Henry James	*Otto Friedrich*	643
Dear Memory, *Poem*	*I. A. Richards*	652
REAPPRAISALS		
Thoughts on First Passing the Hundredth Page of *Finnegans Wake*	*Howard Nemerov*	653
BOOKS		
Black is Computable	*Harry N. Scheiber*	656
Reviews by *Justin Kaplan, Joseph Meeker, Kenneth S. Lynn, Steven Schlossman, Charles R. Larson, William Haley, Jeffrey Kline*		673
THE READER REPLIES		689
INDEX		693

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Something Novel from Chicago

THE ANGELIC AVENGERS
Isak Dinesen

Isak Dinesen (Baroness Karen Blixen) wrote this melodramatic thriller during the German occupation of Denmark. With skill and intelligence, the author of *Out of Africa* explores the questions of retribution and courage.

1975 320 pages Cloth $8.95

OLSON'S PENNY ARCADE
Elder Olson

"Mr. Olson's very considerable abilities as a scholar, philosopher, literary critic, and aesthetic theoretician all go into the poems in perfectly amazing and meaningful ways. The new collection is an advance even over his previous books, and this is high praise indeed."
—James Dickey

1975 104 pages Cloth $7.95

THE WESTERN APPROACHES
Poems 1973-75
Howard Nemerov

A collection of some seventy verses, this volume includes some of the richest and most significant poems of a contemporary master.

"This strong collection should mark a major episode in his career, and in modern poetry as well."
—Daryl Hine

1975 120 pages Cloth $7.95

The University of Chicago Press
Chicago 60637

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One of 1975's most handsome gift books

The Prints of Rockwell Kent

One of the most popular printmakers of his day, Rockwell Kent is widely known for his distinctive book illustrations. A highly versatile artist, he moved with ease from painting to printmaking, illustration, and writing. But it is Kent's prints which constitute his most important body of work. In this lavishly produced volume, Dan Burne Jones produces the first definitive *catalogue raisonné* of Kent's prints, consisting of more than three hundred works.

1975 240 pages illus.
Cloth $27.50 to 12/31/75
$32.50 thereafter

Dan Burne Jones
Foreword by **Carl Zigrosser**

The University of Chicago Press
Chicago 60637

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Despairing Optimist . . . . . .

RENÉ DUBOS

When discussing any aspect of our present social crises, people inevitably agree that "we must reorder our priorities," but this is where the agreement ends. Large human and economic resources would indeed become available for worthy new programs if we decided to put less emphasis on certain national activities that are very demanding and no longer popular. For example, most people now reject the idea of maintaining an American military presence all over the world; many question the wisdom of developing hasty projects of space travel for reasons of national prestige; not a few doubt the usefulness of extending still farther our superhighway system. However, even if consensus could be achieved on what should *not* be done, this would not suffice to formulate new social priorities. It is far easier to agree on criticisms of programs that have failed or have proven overambitious than to reach accord on new constructive projects.

It would seem at first sight that certain priorities are clearly defined by the acute social problems of our times, such as unemployment, the economic crises, deficiencies in medical care, crime in the streets, and all the other evils of contemporary life. In fact, public opinion is so preoccupied with these problems that steps are now being taken to deal with them by a variety of political and social measures. More often than not, however, priorities formulated to deal with emergencies turn out to be of questionable wisdom; they commonly generate new problems for the future. Priming the economy to encourage the automobile and airplane industries will help to relieve unemployment now, but will create conditions for massive unemployment in a few years or decades when the availability of fossil fuel once more becomes critical—not to mention the wide range of environmental problems that will result from more extensive use of automobiles and airplanes. A nationalized health service will bring some form of medical care to people who are now deprived of it, but will probably decrease the quality of the services rendered by the health professions. A larger and better-armed police force, with more sophisticated techniques of surveillance, may help to control crime, but will become a threat to civil liberties.

There are differences of opinion, furthermore, concerning the very nature of the projects that deserve priority. As I mentioned in my column in the Summer 1975 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, the Revolutionary Government of Mexico gave high priority to the creation of a sumptuous Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City at a time when an immense majority of Mexican people suffered from acute shortages of all the conveniences, and even necessities, of life. The statements made by Mexican public officials at the time of the dedication of the museum, and inscribed on its walls, indicate that priority was given to this project in the hope that the exhibits of the museum would help the different ethnic groups that comprise modern Mexico to achieve a better sense of

RENÉ DUBOS is professor emeritus at the Rockefeller University and is the author of *A God Within* and *Beast or Angel? Choices That Make Us Human.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

national identity and unity. The Chinese communists also have made priority decisions that can hardly be justified in economic terms. Shortly after gaining control over mainland China they financed elaborate archaeological projects that brought to light hitherto unknown artistic treasures extending from the neolithic period to the fourteenth century. The display of these treasures in Europe and America has probably done more for Chinese prestige than the production of nuclear weapons, the agricultural achievements of the communes, or the role played by barefoot doctors in health improvement.

Noneconomic criteria also influenced the formulation of national priorities in Europe at the end of World War II. In Germany, for example, the city of Hamburg rebuilt its opera house even before the rubble created by saturation bombing had been cleared from the streets. In Poland, the ancient sections of Warsaw were reconstructed as they had been known and loved for centuries before the war, though the country was acutely deficient in housing and faced an uncertain future.

The slogan "we must reorder our priorities" thus is empty of meaning because each nation, each ethnic group, each social class, indeed each person has a particular view of what is essential for a satisfying life. To discuss priorities from a purely economic point of view—as is now the practice among American political and social reformers—is to overlook most of the values that contribute to the quality of the living experience. Health and happiness depend to a very large extent upon certain attributes of the environment in which people live, and upon certain qualities of their social relationships—values that are rarely considered in discussions of priorities. I shall devote the present and following columns of "The Despairing Optimist" to some shortcomings of American life that deserve to be considered in any discussion of national priorities.

One unpleasant aspect of the American physical environment came to my attention the very first evening I spent in the United States. As a twenty-three-year-old immigrant, I arrived in New Brunswick, New Jersey, in early October 1924, and took a room in a small hotel one block from the Raritan River. I naturally felt somewhat forlorn on this first day in an American environment, but was nevertheless eager to investigate my new surroundings. As it was one of those October days when the atmosphere is crisp and exhilarating, I felt like taking a long walk, and immediately thought of going toward the river, just as I would have done in any European town. To my great surprise and disappointment, however, I discovered that it was practically impossible to reach the banks of the Raritan anywhere near my hotel, let alone to walk along a river path. I had to be satisfied watching the motorcars that crossed the bridge over the Raritan and followed the river banks inaccessible to pedestrians.

I have had many similar unpleasant surprises during the fifty years I have spent in the United States. One of my first long trips away from the East was to Omaha, Nebraska, a few years after my arrival in this country. I had read with great delight that Omaha was located on the Missouri—a river that I was very eager to know because it had nourished my imagination about the American continent ever since the days of my youth in France. But once again I was disappointed because the river fronts in Omaha were then, probably still are, occupied by highways, railroad yards, and industrial buildings, which made them essentially inaccessible to pedestrians within the city limits. I left Omaha without having really experienced the Missouri.

I have lived in New York City for the largest part of my adult life—first on Riverside Drive close to the Hudson River, then for a short time in Brooklyn not far from the Brooklyn Bridge, and during the past thirty years in mid-Manhattan within two blocks of the East River. Now that I have visited many of the largest and most famous cities of the world, I cannot think of any one of them that matches New York City for the diversity of its waterways and waterfronts. New York City has 578 miles of waterfront along the Atlantic Ocean, the Hudson River, the East River, and the Harlem River! Herman Melville was so impressed by the contributions of the waterscape to life in Manhattan that he referred

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extensively to the subject on the first page of *Moby Dick*. He described the "crowds of water-gazers" that assembled then at the Battery; he marveled at the fact that "right and left, the streets take you waterward," where people of all social classes could then vicariously enjoy the whole world, watching the great ships that reached the city over rivers and oceans.

The New York City waterfronts have lost much of their romantic appeal since Melville's day, 125 years ago; most of them indeed are now completely inaccessible to pedestrians. It takes much effort to make contact with the Atlantic Ocean from Battery Park or Staten Island; and to approach the great bridges—including the Brooklyn Bridge—that link Manhattan to the surrounding boroughs and to New Jersey. Furthermore, it has become all but impossible to escape from the fumes and noise of automobile traffic anywhere along the Hudson, the East River, and the Harlem River. Much the same can be said of waterways and waterfronts in most other American cities. There is probably no other part of the world in which cities have been so generously endowed by nature from this point of view, but also no country where urban waterfronts have been so grossly mismanaged and spoiled.

Historical excuses for the neglect of waterfronts in the United States are easy to find. Rivers were at first the chief and most convenient means of access to the cities of the new continent, so that their banks had to be used for commercial purposes. Furthermore, most river valleys were infested with mosquitoes that transmitted malaria, so that the tendency was to establish residential sections as far as possible from the river and lake shores. Until recently there was a tradition in much of America that waterfronts were only for poor working people and for bums.

Conditions have now changed; commerce is no longer dependent on waterways; mosquitoes can be controlled and malaria has been practically eradicated. The quality of life in American cities could be greatly enhanced simply by making the waterfronts, and of course the bodies of water themselves, centers of attraction for city dwellers and visitors. Few are the aspects of nature that can offer as wide a range of attractions and as great a diversity of environments as can the rivers, lakes, and oceans on which most cities are located.

Even though many rivers and lakes are now so polluted that they are no longer an asset to urban life, this is no reason for despair, for in most cases the environmental damage is reversible. The recuperative power of nature is so great that wherever steps have been taken to prevent further pollution from industrial and domestic sources, the bodies of water have cleaned themselves by their own natural mechanisms. In other words, it is rarely necessary to apply purification treatments to water; it is usually sufficient to give nature the chance to eliminate the pollutants. For example, Lake Washington in Seattle and the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon, are now very much cleaner than they were ten years ago, simply as a result of strict control over the various sources of pollution. Even near New York City, the Hudson River is again producing in abundance shad of gourmet quality, though the measures for controlling the pollution of the river are still far from ideal.

Controlling pollution is only one aspect of a complete policy of environmental management. Another aspect is to take advantage of waterways and waterfronts for creating positive environmental values readily available to city dwellers. Such attractions will have increasing importance as travel difficulties make it necessary for more and more people to find their pleasures close to their places of residence.

European cities have a long tradition of transforming the bodies of water—even the very minor ones—on which they are located into environments that greatly add to the charm and comfort of urban life. Painters of the Impressionist school have left many records of festive occasions associated with small rivers and lakes. Naturally, several American cities have also succeeded in taking advantage of their waterfronts for public enjoyment. The most famous example is the spectacular Pacific shore in San Francisco, but great achievements are possible even

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

where natural conditions are not so obviously favorable. During my association with Harvard University Medical School thirty years ago, I spent happy hours walking along the banks of the Charles River, at least those short sections of it that have been properly landscaped on both the Boston and Cambridge sides.

Several other examples of successful management of urban waterfronts could be mentioned for different parts of the country, including regions such as the Raritan valley, the Missouri valley, and the Manhattan shoreline, in which I expressed disappointment in the early part of this essay. Since I could not possibly do justice to all the examples of success, I shall limit myself to formulating a few simple remarks of a general nature. The first is that even a small, unspectacular body of water can make an important contribution to urban planning provided it is intimately integrated with the cityscape. Another point is that the design must be such that access to the water is easy for pedestrians and the experience of the waterscape must not be spoiled by automobile traffic. Finally, and probably most important for urban life, the waterscape must not only be attractive from the scenic point of view, but also must be designed in such a way that it can serve as a stage inviting people to engage in pleasurable activities—fishing, boating, picnicking, singing, dancing, acting, and also daydreaming.

Economists will object that improving waterways and waterfronts purely for the sake of urban enjoyment cannot be regarded as a serious compelling priority—but neither was the creation of the Mexico City Anthropological Museum, nor the archeological program in Communist China, nor the rebuilding of the ancient parts of Warsaw and of the Hamburg opera house at the end of World War II. Enriching urban life with the daily satisfactions that can be provided by imaginative use of waterways and waterfronts has in fact an immense economic value, even though it is one that cannot be measured in dollars and cents. If economists do not know how to measure this value, and to incorporate it in their formulation of social priorities, then economics is indeed as dismal a science as it has been said to be.

As a Manhattan dweller, I wish that the city could be restructured according to the image that Paul and Percy Goodman created in their book *Communitas*, and that Melville gave us in *Moby Dick*. Priorities for urban planning should be such that once more "right and left, the streets take you waterward," the Battery welcomes "crowds of water-gazers," and New Yorkers, whenever they want, can become "fixed in ocean reveries" all around the town.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books from Ohio State

Court Satires of the Restoration

By John Harold Wilson

Lampoons or libels of the kind collected in this handsome volume were, in most cases, circulated without their authors' names. Hardened sinners themselves, the anonymous poets were an envious, vindictive, and vicious lot, whose blatant attacks on the personal proclivities and private lubricity of members of the Restoration Court and literary and theatrical circles made them particularly susceptible to various forms of retribution. Written in the coarsest possible language, these satiric verses relied on such favorite devices as fescennine invective, heavyhanded irony, and occasional burlesque. Vastly entertaining, these scurrilous exercises in libelous bawdry provided the rich soil of a tradition that was to shape the later masterpieces of personal satire by Dryden, Swift, and Pope. $14.00

Literature and History in the Age of Ideas

Edited by Charles G. S. Williams

Twenty-one original essays on the French Enlightenment—whose subjects include bibliography, conditions of the book trade, the history of science and of political theory, general considerations of historical writing and literary genres, the evolution of the Enlightenment and its heritages, and individual works of *philosophes* and men of letters—that are informed by a central theme: to clarify the complex interactions of books and ideas with the men, the material conditions, and the institutions of a France that was evolving from reaction to revolution. $17.50

Disease in a Minor Chord

By Edward A. Steinhaus

The man who almost by himself founded the modern science of insect pathology undertakes to trace, largely in the mode of autobiography and personal reminiscence, what has heretofore been the exiguous history of an emergent discipline. $20.00

Ohio State University Press
2070 Neil Avenue
Columbus 43210

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Boutique America!

ARISTIDES

Now that the dust has settled, the counterculture's chief contribution to American life becomes clear. The most important influence of that assemblage of 1960s youth and its camp followers was not on politics, or philosophy, or art, or social organization, but on retailing. Yes, retailing. The counterculture came of age simultaneously with the consumer society, and what could be more fitting than that its participants should turn out to be shopkeepers—that the prefix "counter" should actually come to refer to the counter over which business is done? Fitting, too, that the generation whose chief literary work (a National Book Award winner) has been *The Whole Earth Catalog* should end up living not so much off the land as behind the cash register. The vaunted greening of America, it turns out, has come to little more than the cropping up of plant shops around the country. Candle shops, leather-goods shops, organic food shops, macramé shops, needlepoint shops, handcrafted jewelry and dress shops have brought the commune into the home, or, more precisely, the neighborhood. If one lives anywhere in any of the middle- to upper-middle-class neighborhoods in this country nowadays, one lives in Boutique America.

To live in Boutique America is to live in a state of permanent transitoriness, a tourist in one's own neighborhood. "Tourism," remarked Lincoln Steffens, "is a moral rest." Yet there is little restfulness about Boutique America. Quite the reverse. A feeling of jumpiness pervades, a sense that the shops that are here today will be gone tomorrow. Shops are the landscape of urban life, the trees and shrubs and flowers of city living. But a blight is now on the land: the blight of uniformity. Some judge the interest of a city by the number of blocks of entertaining window-shopping it provides. It is not a foolish measure. Today, walking the shopping districts of many American cities, one experiences a feeling of dislocation not unlike that of waking up in any Holiday Inn or Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge. Where am I—in Georgetown, Westport, Greenwich Village, or Ghirardelli Square? Essentially it doesn't matter. You are in Boutique America.

Boutique America is the new urban renewal. Old Town in Chicago, once a rather shabby working-class neighborhood, was taken up, and eventually over, by the young and the rising middle class during the early 1960s. Old houses were refurbished, new stores moved in, the place became something of a tourist attraction. On weekends, thousands padded up and down its sidewalks, glancing into the windows of head shops, of bars where first folk-singing, and later rock, was featured, of record and clothing and candle and poster shops. A new neighborhood came into bloom, but it was not to be a hardy perennial. Before the 1960s were out, Old Town, or at least its main drag, had become an adolescent Skid Row, populated by scrawny kids with dirty hair and drug-empty eyes and young blacks made belligerent by bad doctrine. Like an island reclaimed by the sea, the neighborhood slowly sank into its former shabbiness. In Chicago, meanwhile, the action moved farther north—more refurbishing, more new shops of the same kind—to a neighborhood rechristened New Town. New Town flourishes at the moment, but it is difficult not to believe that a Newer Town isn't in the offing.

Ironies aplenty are involved. Chief among

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them is that Boutique America set out to counter the creep of uniformity in American life. If Boutique America could be said to have an adversary, then that adversary was Franchise America: that horde of locusts represented by such franchised purveyors of goods and services as McDonald's, Howard Johnson's, Korvette's, Shakey's, and other national fast-food, discount, supermarket, and motel operations that have done so much in recent years to chew up the country- and city-side. Next to franchise bigness, the boutiques offered goods and services on a smaller human scale; next to cold impersonality, the warm personal touch; next to the mass-produced, the handcrafted; next to grossness and crassness, subtlety and delicacy. An anticorporate, an antitechnological, an antibureaucratic impulse appears to be behind the boutique idea. These little shops so clearly travel under the banner of art, of individuality, of the good life itself. Might William Morris have applauded? Or might he have gagged? More likely, confronted with the works of Franchise America and Boutique America, he would have announced a plague on both their condominiums.

Much of the art of the shops of Boutique America seems to have gone into their titles. Never before has such furious energy gone into the titlist's job. Where once might have stood the Howard Street Secondhand Clothing Store, the Nor-Shel Delicatessen (owned, of course, by Norman and Sheldon), or Slotkowski's Restaurant, now instead stands the Rag-Time Boutique, The Moveable Feast, and That Little Bohemian Restaurant. ("That" titles are very big in Boutique America—"That Paper Place," "That Plant Shop," "That Britches Joint" are but a few examples.) Heads and Tails is a boutique in my own neighborhood that sells cosmetics and women's underwear (à la Frederick's of Hollywood). For simple irrelevance of title to goods sold, there is the Copper Carrot, which sells kitchen products. But perhaps the best all-round title—best at pointing up the absurdity of the artistic impulse put to the service of retailing—is a small men's shop that carries the title Ciao Rudy by Eugene Rondheim. A shop with a byline, as if it were not a shop at all but a short story! Can boutiques with lengthy epigraphs upon their windows, dedications on their doors, be far behind?

Vulgarity, like bad news, travels fast. E. M. Forster, in his biography of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, remarks that "He wanted a democracy where everyone will be an aristocrat." In contemporary America, where nearly everyone appears to be—in the preposition of our day—"into" art, are we about to achieve a democracy where everyone will be an artist? To pursue this matter of titling, why should retailers enjoy a monopoly? What of the professions? Can we look forward to dental offices entitled Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is, law offices entitled That Litigious Place, churches entitled Pascal's Best Bet, funeral homes entitled Oblivion Unlimited? Ours has always been a country of the widest possibilities.

Whenever Igor Stravinsky, in his later years, was apprised of some new development in modern art—multimedia, perhaps, or pop art—he would ask, "Who needs it?" It is a good question, and a pertinent one to ask about various of our new boutiques. Who needs all these new plant, candle, leathergoods, needlepoint shops? Hard to say. Certainly many of them, judging by the narrowness of their specialties—shops that sell kites, say, or soap, or wooden toys, or coffee beans—seem to defy the law of supply and demand. They are a refinement on our consumer society, the larger part of which spends a great deal more time in consuming products than in producing them. The refinement is that these boutiques seem designed at least as much for their owners as for their customers. They have upon them the imprimatur of the "creative"—they smack of the inventive, they smell of the adorable, they stink of the cute. Who needs them? Their owners would appear to be the ones: a new middle-class nation of shopkeepers, *boutiquistes,* artists all. These boutiques can only have as their justification for being the fact that they are extensions of their owners' personalities, representations of their expressive side; this plus the hope of showing a sizable profit. How else understand them?—for trivia has never known such concentration and the *esthétique du schlock* has never been brought to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a higher sheen than in Boutique America.

Viewed as a sociological phenomenon, the rise of Boutique America would appear to be connected with two factors: the end of large-scale emigration to America and the arrival into affluence of the middle class. Immigrants, in this century at least, have tended to supply the principal source of goods and services to the American public. Uneducated but earnest in the effort to get a leg up, the Greeks ran restaurants, the Jews went into retailing, the Italians sold produce and became florists, the Irish (along with being policemen) worked as waiters and owned neighborhood bars, the Germans did a bit of everything. The uprooted thus put down roots. We are now in the generations of their sons and grandsons and great-grandsons, for whom such work will no longer do. The truth is, for the industrious and the future-minded, our much-maligned American Dream has worked very efficiently. Owing to effort, encouragement, and sacrifice, the son of the Italian florist became a CPA, the son of the German butcher graduated from medical school, the Irish waiter's daughter went off to law school, and the son of the Jew who owned a drycleaning shop has become a professor. Who's left, then, to mind the store?

Why, the middle class itself—or that portion of it comprised of reasonably educated and reasonably affluent people who have not somehow or other found a niche elsewhere. Among them are middle-class women conditioned to expect fulfillment (assuming, of course, such a thing exists) but insufficiently trained to acquire it through work; and youth, that transient class, too often educated beyond their competence and always headed elsewhere. In *Down and Out in Paris and London,* George Orwell, speaking from his angry socialist side, remarked that in anything resembling a good society certain jobs would simply be done away with. Waiting on tables was one such job; perhaps being a shopkeeper or a clerk would have been others for Orwell. He might have been right, even though he was writing about the hierarchically arranged societies of France and England in the thirties. In our own un-hierarchically arranged society, however, it may be the better part of wisdom to assume that every job done well is worth doing. Orwell was spared Boutique America, where the spirit of democracy has made a mockery of such jobs even while people continue to live off them.

George Woodcock, in *The Crystal Spirit,* tells a delightful anecdote about Orwell and restaurants. Despite his working-class sympathies, Orwell liked the best food. Whenever he struck a small coup—a sale to an American magazine, or a larger royalty check than he had expected—he would be off to an excellent London restaurant, there to set himself up to a first-class meal. As a balm to his working-class sympathies, however, before sitting down to table, Orwell would remove his suitcoat, place it over the back of the chair, and polish off the meal, working-class style, in shirtsleeves. A nice instance, it has always seemed to me, of having it both ways.

I know a restaurant I should love to have taken Orwell to for a bit of Boutique American dining, where I suspect that he would have kept his suitcoat on. The restaurant is entitled Fritz That's It!, exclamation point and all. Orwell, upon entering, might have been good for a few exclamations of his own, for Fritz That's It! is what might be termed a multimedia restaurant. Music blares, posters of considerable grotesquerie festoon the walls, dark and din prevail. Whether to bring George Orwell for lunch or dinner is a perplexing question. At dinner he might enjoy the Donald Duck, or the Wells Fargo Escargo, or Giv 'Er Liver, or Cheap Stroganoff. At lunch, though, he might be tempted by Fishyssoise or Anti-Fatso Salad. Recalling in *The Road to Wigan Pier* something of Orwell's animus against vegetarians and fruit-juice drinkers, I would not dare to suggest the Vegetarian Omelette or one of a variety of Health Juices offered. I have a hunch that the atmosphere at Fritz That's It! might just put George in an austere mood, so perhaps I would have done best to suggest he order Sorry Fred . . . No Bread! ("½lb. of chopped steak broiled to your taste and topped w/ steamed vegetables and melted monterey jack cheese accompanied by sliced tomatoes vinaigrette. *Absolutely no bread or potatoes . . . even if you beg! $2.30"). The menu prose might have put Orwell off

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even further—the man was a purist about the English language, remember—but what would he have made of the waitress? If she at all resembled the young woman who waited on me during my one appearance at the restaurant, she would arrive at our table to announce: "Hey, I'll be with you guys in a sec. They're all screwed up in the kitchen, haven't been able to get it together in there yet. But, here, check out these [menus], and I'll be right back to take your order."

Orwell can be mercifully spared a visit to Dr. Jazz, an ice-cream parlor of boutique inspiration. For one thing, when one lights up a cigarette in Dr. Jazz a loudly moaning siren goes off. Orwell was a heavy smoker, and, should he have chosen to light up, the siren might just have startled him into dropping his cigarette into his banana split. For another thing, like most Boutique America operations, Dr. Jazz features a heavy strain of nostalgia—ice-cream tables and chairs, nickelodeons, old-style pinball machines and skill games—yet its owners' nostalgia figures not to have been Orwell's. Or mine. For myself, the kind of nostalgia Boutique America specializes in does nothing so much as rivet my attention to the Now. Besides, any nostalgic journeying into the past is brought up short with the arrival of the check: ice-cream sodas and sundaes at Dr. Jazz run from $1.35 to $2.20. The generation that coined the term "ripoff" is now busily coining the proceeds from ripoffs of their own perpetration.

If anyone senses that this column is written out of personal grievance, his instincts are near perfect. My own neighborhood is, alas, currently undergoing boutiquification. Such a nice dull neighborhood it is, too. Or rather *was,* till one day large signs were posted on neighborhood shop windows announcing, Paul Revere-like, "The Main Is Coming," "The Main Is Coming." The Main turns out to be a Boutique America shopping center on Main Street. I shall provide a tour of it presently, but first I shall attempt to get at what I so like about my neighborhood and what about it seems to me so worth saving.

What, really, is wanted from a neighborhood? Convenience, certainly; an absence of major aggravation, to be sure. But perhaps most of all, ideally, what is wanted is a comfortable background, a breathing space or intermission between the intensities of private life and the calculations of public life. In the neighborhood, relationships need not become entangled, behavior need not be triggered by motive. In the neighborhood—between the drama of the household and the battlefield of the career—the casual reigns, the quotidian dominates. In the neighborhood, life mercifully flows on.

Like the tides of the moon, the neighborhood in which I live has its own regular rhythms. In the early morning hours, there are the nattering of squirrels, the twittering of birds, the creaking of the newspaper delivery man's steel-wheeled cart. Things pick up around eight o'clock, as people set off for work. Showered and shined, ready for drama or dullness as the case may be, they step off to offices and shops. Yellow buses pull up to take children to day-care centers or nursery school, and in the summer to day camp. The majority of the kids go off to grade school three blocks away, or to the junior high school six blocks away, or to the high school a few miles distant. The neighborhood settles down. A young mother walks by with her infant in a pram. A truck from United Parcel stops for a delivery. A cat pads across a lawn. An elderly woman, a cane in one hand, a shopping bag in the other, trudges by. Near eleven, the postman is on the block. After three, school out, children take over the block: a boy bangs a tennis ball against a garage wall, two younger children chase a dog, bikes are everywhere. Around five-thirty, adults begin to return from downtown, some having stopped along the way for groceries or for cleaning. Dampened and rumpled after the day downtown and the subway ride home, they have roughly fourteen hours to give over to dinner, television, reading, lovemaking, and sleep, before starting out again. With the dark, a new quiet sets in. Teen-agers gather at the park or down at the lake; they leave behind them a clinging odor of pot or a few empty beer cans. The streets empty out, and only an occasional dog-walker appears after ten. Safe though the neighborhood generally is, this is still 1975, and even here paranoia is the better part of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

valor. The next day the same rhythm will begin again.

Weekends the rhythm changes. Saturday morning the street jumps with people on errands: much toting of laundry, drycleaning, groceries. A more fervid energy is given over to the serious business of play. Couples glide by on bicycles. Tennis rackets are unscrewed from presses, unsheathed from covers. Camping equipment is loaded into trunks or onto car carriers. (In winter, skis replace camping equipment.) A slower, more dispersed traffic is on the street Sundays: people lug home their three or four pounds of *New York Times* or *Chicago Tribune*. In warm weather three couples living in an apartment building north of mine used to bring their breakfasts out to their building's small front lawn—in training for the more spacious life of the suburbs to which they have doubtless repaired by now.

A more than adequate supply of characters are about. A Negro cowboy roams these streets: a man who looks to be late into his sixties, he strolls about in sheepskin coat, a ten-gallon hat broken in at the brim, curly white sideburns, a bandana round his neck. An elderly woman, pale and frail, walks about wrapped up in an overly large blue raincoat, black men's socks covering her thin legs, a babushka over her head tucked in snugly under the chin. Sitting on the small bench outside the neighborhood news kiosk is a man of glistening ebony color, with a slender head upon which are deployed features of an extraordinary delicacy and elegance. So handsome, so photogenic, so much the grist for a certain kind of art photography does he seem that more than once I have watched a stranger with a camera ask permission to photograph him. He invariably complies, smiling exuberantly, revealing several missing teeth. A woman a few buildings down my block feeds squirrels by hand at her high first-floor window. Five or six squirrels scale the wall to reach her ledge, and the tableau there presented makes it all too easy to imagine them taking over her apartment. A man in a beret, scraggly gray beard, and matching long hair lives around the corner; he wears all black in the winter, all white in the summer, and does I know not what for a living. Central casting is to be congratulated for supplying these characters.

"Nice day, Mr. Steadman."

"Not if you've bet on the Cardinals it isn't, Mr. Aristides."

He is a neighborhood shopkeeper, runs a cleaning establishment, a solitary man with a solitary vice: gambling on ball games. Unmarried, of middle age, neither an addict nor a fanatic, he is a man who, quite simply, enjoys his gambling. Across the street from Steadman's is the shop of Mr. William Richardson, shoe repair. (Will there be men in future generations who will do such jobs, or will shoes be made to be thrown out when the heels wear down or a hole is worn in the sole?) Mr. Richardson is a Negro, a man of perfect diction and high dignity. Adorning the wall of his shop is a commendatory plaque citing his efforts in behalf of the NAACP. Up the street is Wulf's, a Certified Grocery Store, now in its second generation of ownership. Mr. Wulf, Jr., in his middle forties, is quiet, competent, and roughly six feet six. He once played basketball for Michigan State: one imagines him not much of a scorer but very strong off the boards. Next door to Wulf's, at the corner, is Leo's Pharmacy. Leo's specialties are cameras, which sell pretty well, and flattery of his female customers, which doesn't always sell. "A beautiful day, now that you're here," he will say to one of them. Or "Where is that beautiful smile this morning?" A block away, on Main Street, used to be Joe's Laundromat. A furiously hard worker and an unshakably cheerful man, Joe carries a tattooed number on his forearm, memento of years in a Nazi concentration camp. When Boutique America came into the neighborhood, rents went up all round, and Joe chose to move. Into his place has since been inserted Sawdust, Inc., a shop that sells wooden toys and offers classes in woodcarving.

I do not want any wooden toys, I do not want any lessons in woodcarving, though I did like to have my laundry done at a reasonable price. Nor do I want to attend classes in "mixed media on canvas," which I note are to be offered up the street at The Tapestree, Inc. Nor, again, do I want classes in macramé, which will be held at the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chicago Bead Company, soon to open at The Main, the Boutique America shopping center (they, of course, would not use the word shopping center but prefer "mall").

As it turns out, The Main is actually the second Boutique America shopping center in the neighborhood, both of which have been developed by the same man. (A boutique developer? Who says there is no longer any place for the enterprising in America!) That the two are only a block away from each other and may cause some problems of mercantile redundancy seems not to bother anyone. The first has seven stall-like shops on two floors, with a restaurant above. "Description is revelation," Wallace Stevens says, so allow me merely to give the titles of these shops: Creative Yarns, Mostly Handmade, Sunny Side Up (which turns out to stock items also "mostly handmade"), The Mixed Bag, The Print Mint, All That Good Green Stuff, and Artesanias. The stores surrounding it on the same block are: Off the Hoof (leather goods), Stonerope (ceramics, macramé, stoneware, et cetera), The Smithern (custom carpentry, handcrafted jewelry), The Tapestree, Inc. (needlework, latchwork, Rya rug supplies), Mark Levin Woodworks (custom furniture, interiors, and woodenware), and Ye Rams (women's clothing).

The Main, a block away, very nearly duplicates these various (ah) services, with a few of what the mail order business calls "add-ons." It contains Circe (classical allusions do not care who use them), a women's dress shop also selling handcrafted jewelry; the Green Grocer, another plant shop; Wood 'N' Things, more wooden toys; The Brown Bean, coffee, tea, herbs, and spices; Slipped Disc, records at no discount; My Favorite Soap Opera, soap, stuffed animals, and other debris; House of Teak, second-rate Scandinavian furniture; Neville Sargent Gallery, original paintings, prints, sculpture, and jewelry; Amazingrace, a coffeehouse and folk-singing and rock emporium; and—a brief bow in the direction of utility—The Main Currency Exchange. Still to come are Windy City Kite Works, kites and accessories; The Main Stitchery, one gathers more needlepoint, et cetera; The Chicago Bead Company, mentioned above; and Revenir, a pastry café where continental coffee is to be sold. A short way down the block is It's Natural, which carries organic food and such; and down the block in the other direction still another leather shop and I.D., The Idea Store, furniture and knickknackery. In short, the works; as Zorba the Greek might say, the full catastrophe.

But what is the point of all this ranting? One might argue, simply, that it all comes down to a matter of "life style." Boutique America is the going life style, and it is too bad if it does not happen to be my life style. To which I would rejoin: What if one isn't interested in life style, but just in life, in the flow and weave of it and in its need for order and tranquility? Does Boutique America promise a better life, a new and more intelligent order of things? One wonders. The Main, interestingly enough, for all its ecological look, is currently undergoing zoning difficulties. Its developer, it seems, has failed to provide sufficient parking spaces, and some people in the neighborhood have lodged complaints. Interestingly, too, it has been brought out that the developer, an architect, is part of a development group. Another member of this group turns out to be president of the insurance company for which one of the sons of the mayor of the City of Chicago works. Much talk is in the air about underassessed property taxes and deals of different kinds. It may be Boutique America, but it still sounds pretty much like business as usual.

Yet it is not quite business as usual. It figures to be jumpier. How long can, say, The Brown Bean last? Will the Windy City Kite Works weather the winter? How much handcrafted jewelry, wooden toys, plants, and needlepoint are needed? One looks for many failures and much turnover of owners—a state, in effect, of permanent transience. In the credits for the movies of the thirties and forties, a man used to be listed as responsible for "continuity." We could use the services of such a man in our lives. In daily life it is precisely continuity that seems in short supply, the sense that things fit together and flow smoothly. Boutique America does not promise to provide it; quite the reverse.

There is an old story about a man who goes

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

back to his old neighborhood after an absence of thirty-one years. He had left when drafted into the army in World War II, and afterward had settled on the West Coast. Predictably, upon returning to his neighborhood, he finds everything changed. Where once a family-owned grocery store stood, there now stands a supermarket. Where once a small Greek restaurant stood, now stands a McDonald's. Where once stood Kogan Bros., Jewelers, now stands a Just Pants. But he does note one remnant from the old days, Koussitsky's Shoe Repair, and as he walks by the shop it flashes upon him that thirty-one years ago he left a pair of shoes with Koussitsky and never bothered to pick them up. Could they still be there? Why not, for the hell of it, find out?

Koussitsky still runs the shop. A bent old man thirty-one years ago, he is even more bent now. Our man says: "Excuse me, Mr. Koussitsky. I don't expect you to remember me, but I used to live in this neighborhood, and thirty-one years ago I left a pair of shoes with you for repair that I never picked up. I'm almost embarrassed to ask, but I wonder, do you still by any chance have them?"

Koussitsky looks up at him, squints, then says, "*Tell me, vas dey black shoes?*"

"Amazing," the man says, "I hadn't even thought about it till you mentioned it, but they were black."

"Tell me," says Koussitsky, "vere dey ving-tips?"

"Astonishing," the man says, "they were wing-tips indeed."

"If I'm not mistaken," says Koussitsky, "you vanted a half sole mid a rubber heel?"

"That is exactly what I wanted."

"And von ting more," says Koussitsky. "I believe you vanted taps on the toes. Is zat right?"

"Right on the button," says the man. "This is wonderful. Do you still have the shoes?"

Koussitsky looks up at him, squinting, and says, "Dey'll be ready Vendsday."

Sad to think that before too much longer in America that joke will be utterly incomprehensible.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HARPER PAPERBACKS

■ *Eileen Aird*
SYLVIA PLATH
Her Life and Work
"Aird strikes a good balance between biographical and critical analysis and provides an excellent overview of her poetry and prose from 1958 to 1963.... Admirers of Plath's works will find in this book an excellent companion to their reading."
—MARY McBRIDE, **Library Journal** **P/341 $1.25**

■ **Hamlin Hill**
MARK TWAIN: GOD'S FOOL
"One of the best and most scholarly writers on the subject of that puzzling and paradoxical genius Samuel Clemens is Hamlin Hill.... He makes sense of a confused and often contradictory set of data. This is a notable, graceful, and convincing book."
—DORIS GRUMBACH, **The New Republic** **CN/391 $3.45**

■ **Robin Lakoff**
LANGUAGE AND WOMAN'S PLACE
"Woman's language has as its foundation the attitude that women are marginal to the serious concerns of life, which are preempted by men."
—from the book **CN/389 $2.25**

■ **Anne and Henry Paolucci, Eds.**
HEGEL ON TRAGEDY
"[**Hegel on Tradegy**] makes available a good deal of important and hitherto almost inaccessible material. An ambitious project well realized. The Introduction is both substantial and persuasuve."
—JEROME H. BUCKLEY **TB/1869 $4.95**

■ **C. Moody**
SOLZHENITSYN
"[This book has an] extremely readable style. Its author obviously has a good knowledge of both the Russian language and Solzhenitsyn's work, as well as the Soviet background.... He identifies the central issues unerringly."
—Times Literary Supplement **P/340 $1.50**

■ **Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn**
LETTER TO THE SOVIET LEADERS
With a New Preface by the Author
"This letter was born and grew out of a single thought: how to avoid the catastrophe with which we as a nation are threatened."
—A. SOLZHENITSYN, **from the Preface** **P/339 $1.50**

For a complete
catalog, write
Harper & Row
Paperback Dept.
10 E. 53d St., New York 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Great Disorder of Speech

PAUL A. FREUND

IN THE YEAR 1976 WE CELEBRATE THE ANNIVERSARY of a seminal event in the history of human liberty—the introduction of printing into England by William Caxton, A.D. 1476. To the problem of the dissemination of knowledge and ideas the new device brought a promise of solution: a promise merely—recall that the Emperor Charlemagne read with difficulty and could never get the hang of writing. To the sense of community and order, at the same time, the device brought a threat of dissolution. How the promise and the threat have been assessed by those who think and those who govern is the subject of this synoptic sketch.

The two great dangers facing modern society, Paul Valéry has said, are disorder and order. When I quoted this *aperçu* in England at a symposium on civil disobedience, the presiding officer, a peer of the realm, remarked, or rather snapped, with Podsnappian disdain, "Oh, that's very French!" Perhaps so; but it is matched in the words of an American who was presumably a good lawyer and certainly a very great poet, Wallace Stevens, in his "Connoisseur of Chaos":

> A. A violent order is disorder; and
> B. A great disorder is an order. These
> Two things are one. (Pages of illustrations.)*

These verses might be an epigraph for my essay, which is meant to furnish some "pages of illustrations."

PAUL A. FREUND is Carl M. Loeb University Professor at Harvard University, where he teaches constitutional law. He is the author of *On Law and Justice*. "The Great Disorder of Speech" is the text of the fourth Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities, delivered in Washington, D.C., on April 30, 1975, under the auspices of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

* This and other poetry selections are from *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens*. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liberty and community, freedom of expression and its limits, were notably addressed by the great English secular trinity of Johns: Milton, Locke, and Mill. "Give me liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties." Milton's attack on licensing of printing was passionate, but it was prudently circumscribed in two, and possibly three, respects. This exalted liberty was for the exalted in belief:

> I mean not tolerated popery, and open superstition, which as it extirpates all religious and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate, provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and the misled; that also which is impious or evil absolutely either against faith or manners no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw itself.

What was to be fostered in the quest for truth were "those neighboring differences, or rather indifferences," that marked the disputations among Protestant sects.

Milton's argument was circumscribed, not only doctrinally, but procedurally as well. The attack was directed against licensing, prior restraint, censorship in its most literal form. The criminal law, in its seventeenth-century mercies, remained. For those publications that, coming forth unlicensed, were "found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectual remedy that man's prevention can use." Precisely why, from the point of view of either the publisher or the victim of a criminal libel, it is more obnoxious to ban the publication than to inflict condign punishment thereafter was not made clear. This is not to be critical or condescending toward the most magisterial pronouncement on the pursuit of truth, any more than it is in derogation of Democritus that his vision did not dissect the atom in the terms of Niels Bohr. The case against prior restraint remained to be elaborated by history. A third limitation in the *Areopagitica* is problematic. The fact that Milton himself subsequently served for a year as a censor of newssheets suggests, at least, that the omission in his great tract of explicit reference to that form of publication may have been deliberate.

A generation after the *Areopagitica,* John Locke extended the scope of toleration, as befits one who objected to the doctrine of in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nate ideas, but still with caution in the name of the social compact: ". . . those are not at all to be tolerated who deny the being of God. Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist."

More than a century later, when John Stuart Mill took up the theme of liberty, the religious-political complex had receded as a threat, but there was a residual apprehension of the mob, the great unwashed. "Liberty as a principle," Mill wrote, "has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one."

In his well-known reply to Mill, Sir James Stephen thrust at the chink in the armor. "Why then," asked Stephen, "may not educated men coerce the ignorant? What is there in the character of a very commonplace ignorant peasant or petty shopkeeper in these days which makes him a less fit subject for coercion on Mr. Mill's principle than the Hindoo nobles and princes who were coerced by Akbar?" As it might be put today, the descent from the tutelary state to the totalitarian is easy.

Each of these philosophers saw liberty of expression as an instrumental value, an aid to the apprehension of something identified as the true or the good; accordingly the limits of expression were to be drawn in light of its serviceability. What warrant then could be found for freedom of expression in the philosophy of a skeptic, or in a skeptical age? For an answer we would do well to turn to the thought of Mr. Justice Holmes, for whom "truth" was "the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market." Freedom of expression was not instrumental in a quest; it created its own object, its Holy Grail. The principle of freedom of speech from repression was not, however, subject to the same relaxed skepticism. In Holmes's existentialism the activity of speech was of a different order from its particular content, and so the issue of freedom versus restraint was salvaged from the class of issues to be left to the competition of the market. The process, unlike any of its content, was intrinsically good; and Holmes was able to escape from his own skepticism by a hierarchy of categories akin to Bertrand Russell's theory of types.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Skepticism in a jurist is matched by humility in a theologian. Holmes, the believing unbeliever, and Reinhold Niebuhr, the unbelieving believer, reached a point of convergence. Dr. Niebuhr was speaking of moral truths and their inevitable historical corruptions and misappropriations and fragmentary formulations.

> This alone [he submitted] would justify the ultimate freedom of a democratic society, in which not even the moral presuppositions upon which the society rests are withdrawn from constant scrutiny and reexamination. Only through such freedom can the premature arrest of new vitalities in history be prevented. . . . A society which exempts ultimate principles from criticism will find difficulty in dealing with the historical forces which have appropriated these truths as their special possession.

Once a principle is established, a jurist has a special obligation to delineate its limits. Not for him the exhilaration of dangling in the void from a lofty premise; he must find his footing on the hard rung of a middle axiom. Justice Holmes found the limiting principle in the test of clear and present danger, which he appropriated from the criminal law, where it served to mark the line at which innocuous preparation for a crime passed over into a punishable attempt. Speech, then, would be privileged if, and only if, it did not create a clear and present danger of a result that society could properly forbid. The celebrated example is falsely crying "Fire!" in a crowded theater—an example, it has always seemed to me, that is singularly unhelpful. For the cry of "Fire!" is a peculiar kind of speech, not the sort that gives rise to the troublesome problems in this field. The cry is not the ordinary communication of information, or argument, or exhortation, or entertainment. It is in the nature of a preset signal to action, which could have been conveyed by lanterns in a belfry. More to the point would have been a discussion of what may be said on the stage, not in the pit.

There are difficulties with the clear-and-present-danger test apart from the illustration. For one thing, it does not analyze the causal link between the speech and the danger: although the speech may be moderate and rational, the audience may be hostile and emotional. A clear and present danger of violence is created, but in which direction should the strong arm of the law be pointed? Another difficulty is that no account is taken of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relative seriousness of the danger (it might be simply a trespass on barren land) compared with the importance of the speech. Moreover, the test of certainty and imminence is subject to loose construction by an apprehensive jury, and even to manipulation by judges, as when the Smith Act, directed against the teaching of communism, was sustained by use of a sliding scale, weighing the gravity of the danger discounted by its improbability, thus countenancing speculation in historical futures, the most dangerous form of gambling with the liberty of speech. And finally, the clear-and-present-danger test, although it has its uses in the area of seditious speech where it arose, is not a broad-spectrum sovereign remedy for such other complaints as defamation, obscenity, and invasions of privacy, where the complex of interests at stake requires closer diagnosis and more refined treatment.

For that kind of treatment it is more promising to look at history (law being history with the history left out). But before making that move, a word more needs to be said about the philosophers. They give us a mood, a rationale for a principle that must be taken, however, as defeasible. There is something perhaps too exclusively intellectual about their valuation of expression, too neglectful—to use an old-fashioned phrase—of the affective side of expression, for both the audience and the author. For an appreciation of this side we do best to turn to the poets in their discursive moments. "We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life." Shelley spoke for the recipient, and modestly, too, for it can be maintained that we do not really "know" a thing—whether it be the inside of a coal mine or the Bill of Rights—until we know it feelingly, kinesthetically. For the experience of the artist himself I call again on Wallace Stevens, in his "Reply to Papini":

> . . . The poet
> Increases the aspects of experience,
> As in an enchantment, analyzed and fixed
> And final. This is the centre. The poet is
> The angry day-son clanging at its make:
> The satisfaction underneath the sense,
> The conception sparkling in still obstinate thought.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Whatever the philosophic bases for freedom of expression—whether as an indispensable means to the discovery and spread of truth or as a fulfillment of the human vocation to seek to persuade, to inform, to entertain, and to astonish one another—the freedom is, as I have said, defeasible in smaller or larger measure. To regard it as never requiring accommodation with the interests of integrity, security, personal reputation, and human dignity would be to take part of the values of life—however grand a part—in place of the whole, in the realm of public policy to commit the offense of political synecdoche.

If, in making the necessary accommodations, we turn for guidance to history, it is not with a view to establishing a hierarchy of values. To do that would be to confuse history with the historian, the historian who draws out of his narrative hat the values he has smuggled into his normative sleeve. To view history as a sort of retrospective politics, Santayana warned, is like looking over a crowd to find one's friends. A similar warning was sounded by Lord Acton: "Whatever a man's notions of these later centuries are, such in the main the man himself will be. Under the name of History, they cover the articles of his philosophic, his religious and his political creed. . . . Modern history touches us so nearly, it is so deep a question of life and death, that we are bound to find our way through it, and to owe our insight to ourselves."

We look to history for those prudential cautions and occasionally prudent arrangements that may achieve a satisfying accommodation of values: in politics as in the realm of ideas, a not-too-coerced order, a not-too-chaotic disorder. For speech and press, if we look to the experience of England prior to the American Revolution, we encounter three forms of coercion in the name of order: censorship, taxation, and criminal prosecutions.

Censorship, despite Milton's attack (which in fact went almost unnoticed), was irresistibly attractive to Puritan as well as royal regimes. Although the demise of the Star Chamber in 1641 removed one set of enforcers, the surveillance was carried on alike under Romanist, Anglican, and Puritan rule by the Printers' and Stationers' Company and their agents, the monotony broken only by a bewildering succession of turnabouts in the illicit and the licit. The scheme was codified in the Licensing Act of 1662, which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prohibited the printing, sale, or importation of "heretical, seditious, schismatical, or offensive books," or what "may tend . . . to the scandal of religion, or the church, or the government. . . ." Built into this forbidding authority was a basic conflict of interest, for by another section of the law the Stationers' Company was recognized to have a monopoly of publishing as granted by the crown, which extended to works domestic and foreign, modern and classical. It was indeed a political-ecclesiastical-commercial complex with a vengeance.

Enacted for seven years, the statute was extended for two-year periods and would require renewal in 1695. As every schoolboy knows, Parliament allowed the act to lapse in that year. To be sure, a committee of the Commons was engaged in drafting a more acceptable licensing law, but before their work was done the session expired. And so the great principle of freedom of the press was established, if not in a fit of absent-mindedness, then in a spasm of inanition.

Every schoolboy knows, too, Macaulay's mordant commentary on the episode. The Commons presented to the Lords a statement of eighteen points in opposition to renewal, closely matching a paper prepared for the purpose by John Locke. "But," Macaulay complains, "all their objections will be found to relate to matters of detail. On the great question of principle, on the question whether the liberty of unlicensed printing be, on the whole, a blessing or a curse to society, not a word is said." The statement of the Commons did indeed address itself to the administrative abuses under the act: the bribery of licensors, the needless cost and delay, the slipshod quality of monopolistic printing, the domiciliary searches for unlicensed presses and books, the unconfined discretion given to the licensors under the loose terms of the act. By way of extenuation for the tone of these objections by the Commons, it is sometimes suggested that they were drawn up to influence practical men of affairs in Parliament, and in any event your Englishman is embarrassed and confused in the presence of large declarations of universal principles.

In my judgment, no apologies are necessary: Macaulay's schoolboy has been misled; a recital of the evils and abuses of enforcement was just what was called for in an attack on the licens-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing system. For so long as some forms of control are to remain (through the criminal or civil law), the problem is to identify those features of licensing which make it peculiarly obnoxious. John Locke himself, when he tried to generalize on this differentiation, was singularly unconvincing. He wrote: "I know not why a man should not have liberty to print whatever he would speak; and to be answerable for the one, just as he is for the other, if he transgresses the law in either. But gagging a man, for fear he should talk heresy or sedition, has no other ground than such as will make gyves necessary, for fear a man should use violence if his hands were free, and must at last end in the imprisonment of all whom you will suspect will be guilty of treason or misdemeanour." This would be persuasive if the prior restraint were directed against an author or publisher to suppress still uncomposed works, but it loses its force when applied to existing writing lying open to the judgment of the censor. When, almost a century later, Dr. Johnson looked back wistfully at the era of Tory censorship, he was equally unpersuasive from the other side. "[I]t is yet allowed," he pointed out, "that every society may punish, though not prevent, the publication of opinions which that society shall think pernicious; but this punishment, though it may crush the author, promotes the book; and it seems not more reasonable to leave the right of printing unrestrained, because writers may afterwards be censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because by our laws we can hang a thief."

Both metaphors are parodies of the essential problem of prior restraint—Locke's universally shackled men and Johnson's universally unbolted doors. For the real problem is the process of selection, for shackling or bolting. A process in which the selectors have a personal stake, by virtue of a competitive position, or a need to justify their occupation or to avoid fines for approving an illicit publication; a process where administrative discretion, or indiscretion, is unreviewable; in which no jury stands between the government and its quarry; and in which the standards to be enforced ("offensive" publications) are at best a general warrant to the enforcers—this is a process calculated to promote the bland and stifle the blunt, to result in Herodian enforcement at the cost of the vitality of the press, to strike the balance depicted in *Measure for*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Measure: "There's scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure, but security enough to make fellowships accursed. Much upon this riddle runs the wisdom of the world."

The end of the licensing system brought a proliferation of newssheets, the smaller ones being the most obnoxious to the governing authorities. In the oscillating struggle between government and its critics, Parliament found a new weapon, a stamp tax on newssheets, which by its terms bore most harshly on the smaller publications. The power to tax does indeed involve the power to destroy, if it is done in a discriminatory way, so that the inner political check on the imposition of a generalized burden does not operate.

But the most menacing weapon was the prosecution for seditious libel, the crime of bringing the government or its organs into hatred, ridicule, or contempt. It was menacing not only because of the savagery of the penalties, ranging from the pillory to dismemberment, but because of the peculiar mode of trial. Juries were not allowed to bring in a general verdict of guilty or not guilty after receiving instructions on the law; the king's judges alone undertook to determine whether the published matter was seditious; the jury's verdict simply reflected their finding on whether the accused was in fact responsible for the publication. Moreover, truth was no defense, for in preserving the realm against disaffection, a good opinion of government was necessary; a truthful attack on high officers of state was all the more likely to produce alienation and weaken the bonds of loyalty. This impeccable logic was not abandoned in England until 1843, when truth was established as a defense, though meantime the role of the jury was enlarged by Fox's Libel Act in 1792, as a concession to popular feeling during the hysteria bred by the French Revolution.

On this side of the Atlantic, before the rights of Englishmen finally became the rights of man, the English struggle was recapitulated. While licensing was not transplanted, stamp taxes on the press, and general warrants to search for seditious writings, germinated, in John Adams's celebrated words, the "child Independence." No prior restraint, but criminal liability after publication, the Blackstonian formula, was the accepted framework of debate. The libertarian impulse was directed by lawyers

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and publicists against the special abuses of the law of seditious libel (the "honeyed Mansfieldism of Blackstone," in Jefferson's phrase), against the constricted role of the jury and the failure to recognize truth as a defense. These were the fighting issues in the law of the press in preconstitutional America.

The First Amendment to the Constitution ("Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press") was drawn in seemingly absolute terms; but what exactly was the meaning of the freedom of the press? The only proper answer must be, as it is to similar questions, "What do you mean by 'meaning?' "

The Sedition Act of 1798 was the great testing ground. Passed amid the excitement of the Federalists over Jacobinism abroad and at home, in France and among the Jeffersonian Republicans, the act betrayed its partisan thrust on its face. It was to expire on March 3, 1801, which by a providential coincidence was the date on which John Adams's term as president was due to end. The act made it an offense to publish "any false, scandalous and malicious utterances against the government, Congress, or the President, with intent to defame them, bring them into contempt or disrepute, or excite against them the hatred of the people." Whether the omission of the vice president (Thomas Jefferson) from the list of officers to be safeguarded from abuse was a mere inadvertence on the part of the Federalists can only be conjectured. The necessity for the law was put with emotional force by a principal sponsor of the bill, who quoted an example of the sedition abroad in the land, taken from an attack on John Adams in a New York Republican organ: ". . . The mask should be torn off from this meaner species of aristocracy than history has condescended to record; where a person without patriotism, without philosophy, without a taste for the fine arts . . . is jostled into the Chief Magistracy. . . ." That rising crescendo of abuse could not possibly be tolerated. The act was administered in a similar humor; Robert Frost had not yet written that the way of understanding is partly mirth. One Republican worthy was heavily fined for saying at a tavern, after President Adams had passed through the town to the salute of a cannon, that he wished the cannonball had passed through Adams's posterior. Matthew Lyon, congressman from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Vermont, was convicted and sentenced to jail for his abusive comments on foreign policy in his newspaper, fetchingly called "The Scourge of Aristocracy and Repository of Important Political Truth." While in prison he was reelected to Congress—a precedent emulated in the twentieth century in my own Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

But was the Sedition Act constitutional? It contained the safeguards for which the libertarians had fought as colonists: the defense of truth and the full role of the jury. The answer to the question, I have suggested, turns on the further question, What do you mean when you ask what the First Amendment means? John Marshall, campaigning for Congress in Virginia in 1798, criticized the Sedition Act on grounds of policy, but maintained that it was constitutionally valid. And he was right if you give the First Amendment its denotative meaning. The particular historic devices that were obnoxious to the sons of liberty were avoided. In this sense the First Amendment was fulfilled. In another sense, if a connotative meaning is given, the answer may well be different. If juries were in fact an illusory safeguard, if the defense of truth was likewise illusory in dealing with political diatribe, then the meaning of the guarantee ought to outreach the particulars that gave it birth, in order that the freedom envisaged at its core can be vindicated.

Whether the inadequacies of the safeguards in the Sedition Act should have been foreseen, as they were by Madison with remarkable prescience in the Virginia Resolutions, or whether the First Amendment received a new and more extensive "meaning" in light of the actual experience under the act, the ultimate judgment should be the same under a connotative sense of meaning. To digress: When a judicial nominee is cross-examined by a senator on whether he believes that the meaning of the Constitution changes, the question is an invitation to a discussion of linguistic, quite as much as constitutional, philosophy, although the nominee would doubtless be thought rude and evasive in suggesting this—just as a schoolboy who, when asked what caused the Civil War, gives the only sensible answer, "Why do you want to know?" would no doubt be sent to the headmaster for disciplinary action.

It is worth recalling that even the Jeffersonians, positive as they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were in their condemnation of the Sedition Act on constitutional grounds, did not regard the liberty of the press as absolute. Jefferson himself time and again made it plain that defamation of public officials, like defamation of ordinary citizens, could be redressed through civil actions for damages in the courts of the states. Jefferson, writing to Abigail Adams in 1804 (imagine a president of the United States engaging in serious controversy with the wife of his predecessor on constitutional issues—what a charming Golden Age!), said of the Sedition Act:

> Nor does the opinion of unconstitutionality, and consequent nullity of that law, remove all restraint from the overwhelming torrent of slander, which is confounding all vice and virtue, all truth and falsehood, in the U.S. The power to do that is fully possessed by the several State Legislatures. . . . They have accordingly, all of them, made provisions for punishing slander, which those who have time and inclination, resort to for the vindication of their characters. In general, the States laws appear to have made the presses responsible for slander as far as is consistent with its useful freedom.

The same idea is contained in Jefferson's Second Inaugural, and late in life, writing to a French correspondent on an ideal constitution for a state, he included among the basic principles "Freedom of the Press, subject only to liability for personal injuries." The most articulate of the Jeffersonian theorists on freedom of the press, Titus Wortman of New York, furnished an explanation of this position: "Civil prosecutions, at the suit of injured individuals, are a sufficient restraint upon the licentiousness of the Press. As in such prosecutions it is left to the jury to ascertain the damages sustained, while they afford a real compensation for the injury, they are much less likely to be rendered a dangerous weapon in the hands of a prevailing [political] party, or an aspiring administration." Just how far the risk of verdicts for damages against the press may be consistent, in Jefferson's words, with its useful function has remained to be considered in our own time.

The twentieth century has brought some striking parallels to the seventeenth and eighteenth. Censorship in the classical form of systematic licensing of the press has been repudiated, but so-called prior restraint has taken new forms that require comparison with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the old. The government's attempt to enjoin publication of the Pentagon Papers was free of the special vices of the licensing system: there was no grant of a commercial monopoly to the judges; there was opportunity for appellate review; there was no requirement of systematic submission of publications in advance. And yet the central threat of overkill remained, given the absence of any controlling statutory standards for an injunctive order, the want of a right to jury trial, and the procedural rule that publication in disobedience of a preliminary order during the course of the litigation is punishable as a contempt of court regardless of the possible reversal of the injunction on appeal.

Taxes on the press—"taxes on Knowledge," as they were called—were curiously revived in Louisiana in the 1930s under the aegis of Governor Huey Long. A tax on newspaper revenues from advertising, whose rate varied upward with the circulation of the paper, bore on its face an animus toward the metropolitan press, which was regarded as the special enemy of the state administration. The Supreme Court, not closing its eyes to what all others could see, invoked the history of stamp taxes to strike down the law. "To allow ourselves to fetter [the press] is to fetter ourselves," in Justice Sutherland's words—with an assist, there is reason to believe, from Justice Cardozo.

For seditious libel, however labeled, a new standard in the criminal law has been devised, replacing the clear-and-present-danger test and its deficiencies—the standard of incitement, which adds to the requirement of imminent danger of violence some requisite with respect to the quality of the utterance itself in its context. To be more repressive would be excessive caution—overkill in another form. Half our fears of disorder will be mocked by history, as half the scientific truths taught today will be proved false in fifty years. The trouble is that in neither case do we know which half. We go on teaching science rather than forsaking it, and in the realm of utterance, risk for risk, measure for measure, we stake our fortunes in a marginal case on the side of freedom.

The question raised glancingly by Jefferson but left unanalyzed—how far civil suits for defamation may be compatible with maintaining the useful function of the press as a critic—has become an urgent issue. Most of our states had resolved it by al-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lowing the press an immunity for the expression of opinion, however damaging and distorted, while imposing strict liability for untrue defamatory statements of fact. Under this accommodation, editorial comment and artistic criticism flourished. When, for example, Dorothy Parker wrote that Tallulah Bankhead ran the gamut of emotions from A to B, or that when Leslie Howard played Hamlet last night, Hamlet lost, no one would seriously have considered a libel action. But false statements of fact, even though made innocently, carried a threat of liability, especially so because the amount of damages awarded could be staggering. When a jury in Alabama awarded half a million dollars to a local police commissioner in an action against the *New York Times* for relatively minor inaccuracies in a civil rights advertisement that did not even name him or his office, the legal accommodation of rights had clearly gone awry. Two factors called for attention: the degree of culpability required to make the press liable, and the measure of monetary damages.

In a series of decisions, the Supreme Court has dealt with both issues. On the side of damages, injury to reputation may not be presumed, it must be proved; and punitive damages are permitted only in cases of willful or reckless falsehood. On the score of culpability, a publisher is liable to a public official or a public figure only for that kind of knowing or reckless misstatement. A troublesome problem has been whether the press should have the same immunity when the victim of the false statement is an ordinary citizen but the defamation occurred in the context of a discussion or report of a matter of public concern. At first I leaned to the view that the area of public concern should confer the same latitude on the press, in the interest of untrammeled reporting. But I have since come to the view adopted by the Court—that where the victim is not a public officer or public figure, the balance should move in the victim's favor, permitting him to recover if he can show merely negligence, not necessarily recklessness, on the part of the publisher. In an event of public concern, the person defamed may be an involuntary participant, as in the case of one whose home has been broken into. Even where the person defamed has entered the arena voluntarily, as in the case of a lawyer representing a client or a professor speaking on a public question,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he has not made his character a relevant issue, and a publicist ought to assume the burden of due care if he chooses to impugn that character. Otherwise private citizens may be deterred from entering the arena of public debate. That arena is not occupied solely by the press, and it would be ironic if, in preventing a chilling effect on the press, the law were to chill the entry into the arena by ordinary citizens.

Thus far I have said nothing of the legal controls on obscenity. Actually this concern did not arise until the eighteenth century in England—save as obscenity might be imbedded, as it often was, in politically seditious or theologically heretical writing. But with the rise of a politically powerful middle class, of evangelical Protestantism, and a concomitant fear of the literacy of the lower class, obscenity became a concern of the state, as it did in America in the nineteenth century. No area of law is less satisfactory than this one. The basic difficulty is that there is no consensus on what harm is caused to whom by what means; with these fundamentals in doubt, it would be surprising if there were in fact a satisfactory approach. Whether obscenity harms society by producing dangerous behavior on the part of the consumer or serves to discharge aggressive impulses benignly, whether it is harmful to the consumer himself by producing a state of narcissistic infantile regression, and if so whether this is a proper business of law, are questions unresolved.

It must be said, however, that our Supreme Court has taken a series of positions in the last generation that greatly moderate the reach of obscenity laws. The work in question must be viewed as a whole, not in isolated passages. A serious literary, scientific, or historical purpose will serve to legitimate a work. Standards suitable for juveniles cannot be made the criteria for works distributed to adults. Booksellers cannot be penalized for carrying a work whose contents are not known to them. Material in the home is beyond the reach of the law of obscenity (greatly undermining the rationale of harm to the consumer). And a book or film—the example is the film version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*—cannot be banned because its ideas are immoral or because it makes immorality attractive.

These are significant accomplishments. Yet the nagging ques-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion remains whether even the residue ought to be subjected to the sanctions of the law if there is a willing purchaser and no offensive public display. My judgment is that the law will come to confine itself to public displays (on the analogy of public nuisances), to distribution to juveniles (as an adjunct to parental control), and to zoning restrictions for theaters and bookstores specializing in this form of popular culture. For the rest, it may be adjudged a sin against language or an offense against art—crimes against which the writ of the law runneth not.

Five hundred years after Caxton, generation by generation, struggle by struggle, we in America—writers and speakers, politicians and artists—have achieved, at least for a historical moment, a degree of freedom from official control that would, I daresay, amply gratify Milton, Locke, Mill, and Thomas Jefferson. Meanwhile a different set of problems has emerged, centering on the adequacy and responsibility of the media of communication themselves, problems of new entry into the field and access to the existing media.

Of making many books there may be no end, but of the shrinkage of the daily press there can be no doubt. As technology made possible the proliferation of newspapers—aided, to be sure, by the elimination of licensing—so it is to technology that we look for the removal of economic obstacles. What we read in cold print is now increasingly the product of cold type, and it may be that the savings in cost of equipment and labor will encourage more entries into the field of daily journalism, despite the heavy competition of radio and television. Already there has been a patent flowering of more specialized journals, and the underground press is emerging into the daylight of readership. In all this, the laws of economics are more relevant than the civil law. The law can, of course, combat restrictive competitive practices, as it did a generation ago when the government invoked the antitrust laws to force the Associated Press to liberalize its requirements for membership.

The search for diversity has turned to broadening the spectrum of views available to the consumers of opinion by providing greater access to existing media. The prototype, of course, is found in the electronic media, by dint of the so-called fairness doctrine and the right of reply to personal attacks. The fairness doctrine is a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

corollary of the legal obligation of television and radio stations to broadcast on controversial public issues; in fulfilling that duty, they must give fair coverage, not necessarily in the same program, to opposing points of view.

The physical constraints on the number and location of channels which led in the first place to the necessity of licensing by the government have sufficed to justify imposing upon licensees the moderate duty of openness embodied in the fairness and right-of-reply regulations. Dissemination of contrasting views is germane to the licensing function, as the equitable distribution of energy would be a condition germane to the licensing of hydroelectric sites; and of all controls it is most congruent with the spirit of the First Amendment. Whether technical advances making possible a multiplication of channels will call for a relaxation of these rules is an open question, but it can be said that a proliferation of outlets in the ultra-high-frequency range does not seem adequate, as a practical matter, to cure the shortage continuing on the conventional frequencies that are the staple of viewing and listening.

What bearing, if any, does this governmental oversight have on the printed news media, where the limitation on outlets is owing to the laws of economics rather than the laws of nature? The question was tested in a modest way in 1974, when the Supreme Court considered a Florida law affording a right of reply to public officials and candidates whose character had been attacked in the local press. The law, which was not a model of draftsmanship, was held repugnant to the freedom of the press. While the outcome was disappointing to those who saw in the electronic field a model for the press in a time of scarcity, the differences are significant. The distinctive impact of television, in particular, and its potential for powerful partisanship make some mild form of balance appropriate. Journals of news and opinion have more counterparts in the printed media: the daily press is supplemented and to some extent offset by weekly magazines, neighborhood newssheets, trade and religious periodicals, and more. And although a right of reply to an attack on one's character is a very limited inroad on editorial autonomy—particularly given the very circumscribed right of public officers and public figures to recover damages for defamation—the principle of resisting the government's entering

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wedge is probably a salutary one in the context of journals of opinion, where factual and judgmental attacks on the editorial page may be hard to distinguish.

This is not to say that a univocal press in a given locality is a consummation to be wished. It is only to say that regeneration should come from within—prodded, I should add, by self-interest. If newspapers develop an interesting op-ed page, include a diversity of columnists (Chief Justice Hughes called them the daily calumnists), publish excerpts from other editorial pages and a generous sampling of letters as a mirror of public opinion, those papers may become more popular, the readers more engaged, the circulation higher. For this the responsibility rests ultimately on the community itself.

I have spoken mainly of the great disorder of words, for without it individuals are less than persons and civilization stagnates and atrophies. But civilization is a tension between atrophy and anarchy.

> A. A violent order is disorder; and
> B. A great disorder is an order.

But the poem ends:

> . . . Now, A
> And B are not like statuary, posed
> For a vista in the Louvre. They are things chalked
> On the sidewalk so that the pensive man may see.
>
> The pensive man . . . He sees that eagle float
> For which the intricate Alps are a single nest.

The eagle is an endangered species. We have largely lost, as a nation, the unforced unity of its vision, and we have scarcely begun to turn the great disorder of words into an anthem for mankind. When a physical chemist cannot understand a chemical physicist, when a linguistic philosopher can do nothing with political philosophy except dissolve it, and a psychohistorian is baffled by a Cliometrician, when the fables and myths of one people are viewed as the superstitions of another, one can only put the question, "Two cultures?" and give the answer that Lord Keynes made to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the charge of a bankers' conspiracy, "I only wish there were!"

The task is not one for coercion but for the culture. We need a more universal kind of *McGuffey's Readers,* and in higher education we need not so much a prescription of Great Books, Dr. Eliot's Five-Foot Shelf (the Bible and other Harvard Classics), or the *Britannica's* selection, as a set of Great Themes. There is, to be sure, the *Britannica's* concordance, the Syntopicon of Great Ideas, one hundred and two to be exact; but you would not be surprised if I should have substituted for its first Great Idea—Angels—a theme like Accountability, and not on alphabetical grounds alone.

Disparity of knowledge is inevitable, and diversity of opinion is essential, and both are elements of a lively, healthy society respectful of the intricate Alps of human existence, so long as there is not lost a sense of ultimate unity of purpose, of the organic community of humankind. The great disorder of words may yet give us both the prudential scrutiny of the owl and the floating vision of the eagle.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Death in a Strange Land

D. J. Enright

1 *Journalist*

We lunched together on my honeymoon
In Cairo,
A bright boy, *à la page* and mordant,
The whole lot going for him.

Ten years later, in Bangkok,
A trifle apprehensively
(He'd earned himself a reputation,
To burn always with a hard blowlamp flame,
That was his life)
I took him to a favourite smoking place.
Stripping briskly to his underpants
He scared the placid patrons.
It was just the spirit of the thing,
The spirit he was entering into.
The opium burned with a soft sizzling flame.

Some five years passed, we met
In Singapore, at the Cockpit Hotel.
He gave me his review copy, *An Area*
Of Darkness, mine never came to light.
"Always do a long review—
It's the reading takes the time!
We're paid by the word we write, not read."
He'd bought a house in England,
For all his children and one wife,
Under one roof, he said.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

After he'd left, the manager rang me
About an unpaid bill, "quite unintentional,
I'm sure."

Three years later, at the Cockpit bar
We shared another easy gin or two
(The bill was surely paid).
He was heading for Vietnam then,
In a hurry.

A few days more, then in *The Times*
A brief obituary—
Found dead in bed,
A hotel in Saigon.

"Strange and outrageous,"
Someone said, I think,
Of his life and death.
The blowlamp had burned right out.
Small mercy anywhere.
From Vietnam the stories still kept coming,
Strange and outrageous.

2 *External Examiner*

He must have found us degenerate,
Our visitor.
We went everywhere by car
(It's hot here, we said, there aren't
Any pavements, and a white man walking
Unnerves the natives),
Ping pong our only exercise
Between beers in the Staff Club,
And all those gins we drank.

At home he played squash twice a week
With a colleague twenty years his junior,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And went for long walks on the moors.

Squash was a better drink as well.
Was it drink that made us effete?
Heat made us thirsty—did heat make us effete?

On the eve of his departure,
The papers marked, honours allotted,
Justice tempered with the usual mercy—
At a Chinese restaurant
(Life's ironies are grosser
Than I could fabricate,
I tell it just the way it was—
Is that excuse enough?)
A place called the Celestial Room,
Midnight and the last mild dance,
He dropped to the floor and died.

After the useless hospital,
The police, the prompt sequestering
Of a British passport
(And some spare cash, I found out later),
I rang his unbelieving widow.
For her a February evening
Dank in England,
For me, three in the morning,
Tropic black, the clockwork crickets,
A gibbon's rending cry.

Tomorrow was his birthday, he'd be back
For that. How could I convince her?
I was not convinced. Except
Outside a Chinese detective shouted
About some suitcase and some keys.
True, her tomorrow was our today.

The first time that I slept,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

My dream returned to the restaurant
Exactly as it was,
But now his wife was with us, and a doctor,
So we were less effete.
He fell, exactly as he did. They tended him.
He rose and smiled.
I woke in horror and omission's sin.

But later slept again: the dream resumed its plot,
He fell a second time, and fire consumed him
Every nerve. And neither wife nor doctor
Could assuage that longdrawn agony.

I woke again, in different horror.
But then remembered it the way it was,
And how death came as kindly as it could,
With quite unusual mercy.
Dreams, they say, tell stories
To explain away our woes,
And so we go on living.

After twenty years of teaching in the Far East, D. J. ENRIGHT now works as a publisher in London. A sequence of poems, *The Terrible Shears,* was published by Wesleyan University Press in 1974, and a new collection, *Sad Ires,* will be published in London by Chatto & Windus in October of this year.
Copyright © 1975 by D. J. Enright.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Presenting the American Case

DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN

IN THE PERIOD AHEAD, THERE WILL BE MUCH TALK about the decline of American influence in the world. This will give pleasure to many and instruction to some, and is perhaps to be welcomed on that score. So much so that a case could be made for holding rather closely the knowledge that this decline has been going on for quite a long while, and that it commenced for reasons having nothing to do with the events or the political leaders of the third quarter of the twentieth century. American prestige in the world reached its height in 1919 with the founding of the League of Nations and the extraordinary position of Woodrow Wilson, who for a moment seemed to embody, and in that sense to unify, the hopes of the peoples of the "civilized" world. The moment did not last long, owing in part to a failure of men and institutions in the United States itself. We were not prepared to make the commitment that would have made possible some practical consequences of this extraordinary, if unfocused and fleeting, consensus. It is a sorrowful enough memory, and there is no use to dwell upon it overmuch, but it is useful at this time for at least some person to be clear about what influence means to a nation: it means that other nations want to be like you.

The United States had had such influence for a long while—most of the nineteenth century. Anyone starting up a new government in the Western world was quite likely to model it on that of the United States. This influence was shared, to be sure, with the British and French, whose own institutions could be seen as closely related. But America's size and economic power, along

DANIEL P. MOYNIHAN, former ambassador to India, was recently appointed United States ambassador to the United Nations. This essay was given as the Norman Wait Harris Memorial Foundation Lecture at the University of Chicago.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with its newness, steadily eclipsed the constitutional example of the two older nations. In the first chapter of *The American Commonwealth* James Bryce explained that the "institutions of the United States are deemed by inhabitants and admitted by strangers to be a matter of more general interest than those of the not less famous nations of the Old World . . . for they are believed to disclose and display the type of institutions towards which, as by a law of fate, the rest of civilized mankind are forced to move, some with swifter, others with slower, but all with unresting feet." The seemingly decisive American entry into World War I on behalf of these allies further confirmed the American ascendancy. New nations and new governments, actual or hopeful, not only wished to be like the United States; some wished to be associated with it as well. Wilson at Paris enthusiastically took up the cause of the Armenians, who, unluckily for them, never succeeded in getting the association they hoped for. Unluckily for us, he does not appear to have been in touch with Ho Chi Minh, who was also in Paris at that time, also seeking a new regime. When it was agreed that the world itself needed a new government, the American president had the very thing, a world order modeled directly on the American federal system—constitution, court, legislature, executive, and all.

Now *that* is influence. Americans, however—and this is not so very unusual, either for individuals or nations—did not seem especially aware of this influence. Or, if they were aware of it, they were not notably zealous to preserve it. At one level, we actively sought to shed it. Certainly it was far reduced a quarter-century later when of a sudden we found ourselves concerned with such matters, and commenced the fretful assessment that has rather characterized us since. This could not be reassuring, and has not been. For the United States in 1945 had a curiously unbalanced mix of power, of which the ideological component was even then recessive. Hans J. Morgenthau, in *Politics Among Nations,* describes political power in the context of international relations as deriving from three sources: "the expectation of benefits, the fear of disadvantages, the respect or love for men or institutions." It is probably

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rare for a great power to possess these advantages in a wholly symmetrical manner, and there was certainly a significant imbalance in the American position of a generation ago. We could evoke the expectation of benefits—history will surely attest to that; and we had given evidence of the disadvantages of being on the opposite side from us in a major conflict. We could even evoke the expectation of benefits from the defeated, giving rise in this period to the reported Israeli plan to declare war on the United States in order to reap the benefits of occupation, a plan finally shelved when it occurred to the smaller country that it might win. But we did not evoke that much respect or love, either for men or for institutions.

How so? A satisfactory answer would involve an achievement of historical analysis beyond the purposes of this paper, and possibly beyond the potential of this period, but two elements appear significant. In the first place, we were too successful; it was unnatural. There, in 1945, was a world in ruins—or, in the case of colonial nations, still in fetters. Only the Western hemisphere escaped, and we stood astride it. All was humiliation save for us. How could we not be detested? The few exceptions are instructive. Britain emerged from the war with enough self-respect, France without enough. Their postwar relations with the United States seem controlled by this beginning circumstance. Germany and Japan, defeated, found it easiest to be emulative. The process by which oversuccessful nations are combined against by other nations and reduced in circumstance is nothing new. To all appearances, some such thing began almost the moment the American colossus made its appearance—a process much abetted by the genuine American desire to see other nations rise again.

If one element of the American difficulty arose from too little competition, another arose from too much. Our economy was the largest on earth, our atom bombs the biggest, our Navy the best. But much of the world was then engaged, and for several generations had been engaged (and has continued to be engaged), in an ideological struggle between totalitarian and democratic socialism. The American liberal example attracted few followers. Those who were attracted have not necessarily been the worse for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it, but their example has produced little emulation—suggesting that history has simply not been with us in this time.

The first communist revolution—totalitarian socialism—came with the end of World War I, and, after a phase of expansion, communism was consolidated as "socialism in one country" for a period that lasted a generation. With the end of World War II, expansion resumed with great success, only to cease more or less by 1948. By that time—less noticed, somehow, but not less emphatic—the rise of democratic socialism had commenced. The scores of new nations that came into being the world over modeled themselves not on the United States, nor yet on the Soviet Union, but on various models of democratic socialism that had been formulated in Western Europe earlier in the century and had to some degree been put into practice there. The most conspicuous example was that of Britain under the Labour Party, an example certainly not lost on the forty-six new nations formed from the British Empire after 1947. This trend has been so marked, I have argued, that if the first event is to be termed the Russian Revolution, the British Revolution seems a fair designation for the second. In each instance, a nation was first influenced by an ideology, whereupon the ideology was influenced by the nation. A distinctive compound emerged, only to be adapted further in other settings, and even to be transmuted in some, but always, if you will, with this genealogy in its luggage.

In the "Russian" and "British" competition, the United States was ever a poor third. This was not merely a matter of other models of government being more attractive: *both* these other models had acquired specifically anti-American biases so strong that to be attracted to them was to grow averse to us. For communists, we were capitalists; nor could they forget that after their revolution had begun, Woodrow Wilson sent American troops to try to put it down. For socialists, we were, in the old sense of the word, liberals. Charles Francis Adams, as minister in London, was perhaps not wrong when he wrote in 1865, "The progress of the Liberal cause, not in England alone, but all over the world, is, in a measure, in our hands." Well, the liberal cause was not the socialist cause—certainly not as time went by—and this opposi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion, however muted at first and however civil, was never lost from view and in time grew less civil, rather as world politics did. Henry Pelling, in his study *America and the British Left,* traces the century-long transformation of the American image from admiration in the nineteenth century to something near detestation—certainly fear—in the twentieth. On the British Left America came to be singled out as a place where the worst was likely to happen: *not* a good kind of country to be. Pelling notes that to such British observers, "the New Deal itself, it seemed, might be a first step on the road to the creation of a Fascist state." We have, of course, been trudging that weary road ever since. Little wonder that when American economic and military power declined relatively, the time should have come when American influence as a whole would be seen to have precipitously declined.

This history, if it be accepted as such, does somewhat suggest how the United States might respond to this declining position. At the very least it suggests the nature of the decline. It must be understood, for example, that while we have spent a generation mobilized or actually at war on the borders of the communist world, during that time the socialist world, a different world, has been changing in ways little to our advantage. It must be understood, too (a point made by Zbigniew Brzezinski), that the Soviet Union is increasingly the beneficiary of confrontation between the United States and the new nations, just as the new nations had benefited from confrontation between the Soviets and us. Perhaps first of all it must be understood that ideas matter in world affairs, and that competence in dealing with ideas is likely to become more, not less, important. Hence Max Weber:

> Interests (material and ideal), not ideas, dominate directly the actions of men. Yet the "images of the world" created by these ideas have very often served as switches determining the tracks on which the dynamism of interests kept actions moving.

If we had had, for example, a better sense of our ideological disadvantage in the world, we might have better understood what we were getting into in Southeast Asia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Such reflections, if at all sound, would have been warranted at almost any time, but they would appear to have a special relevance to this moment when so many indices tell us that the long postwar era is coming to a close. Political commentary has more than its share of this coming and going of eras, the half-life of any one of which suggests that "episodes" might be the better term. Yet the signs this time are persuasive. The settlement of World War II is now about agreed upon, it having proved well-nigh impossible to change it in any very significant way.

And so new kinds of relations begin to assume a saliency that in some cases is long overdue: economic policy toward the communist nations; military policy toward the new nations; outer space and the seabed enter the domain of international politics. The problem of war continues, while the specter of famine and pestilence, long essentially absent from the West, reappears as an aspect of domestic no less than international politics. For an incontrovertible aspect of the international system that Mr. Wilson helped to found is that the claims one society may now routinely make on another are of a kind once virtually reserved to communities *within* national societies. A further aspect of the emerging international system is that it begins to reflect the bias for equality over liberty that is more and more in evidence in the world—making it, in that measure, a world more and more distant from the one Wilson would have wished for. This must be seen as a matter of balance. The liberal tradition can be utterly indifferent to equality and see it as quite opposed to liberty, but this is a nineteenth-century heresy more than anything else. Correspondingly, the socialist tradition has room aplenty for liberty. (The question may be asked whether communism is in this sense a nineteenth-century socialist heresy.) But as liberty is the first principle of liberalism, for socialism, and of necessity for communism, equality is the prime test. And equality is the great object of collectivist politics, as Samuel Beer has used the term.

In that sense, world politics are becoming collectivist: an enormous change—one which would register, in this reading, the impact of socialist as against communist mores. We have moved

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beyond the long-established arrangement that Wordsworth described in *Rob Roy's Grave:*

> . . . the good old rule
> . . . the simple plan,
> That they should take, who have the power,
> And they should keep who can.

Which is not to say there are no nations that will any longer act in this way, but such actions (until they succeed?) will be depicted as illegitimate in terms that even the most illegal acts of the past were spared. Or they will be so depicted when carried out by nations whose regimes are seen as unreconstructed and accordingly disposed to such predatory actions.

In domestic politics, collectivism asserts a high level of obligation not so much between individuals as between groups—particularly groups defined by economic function and status: the rich, the poor; the middle class, the workers; the dock laborers, the intellectual workers. It is not so far from the medieval concept of estate, with its notion of entitlement. What is easily, and routinely, left out in the modern and secular version is the corresponding notion of obligation. Certainly this is so in the international version of collectivism. In the present world, nothing contrasts more sharply than the fierce individualism and assertion of absolute rights of sovereignty over their own resources of those very states that are making collectivist claims on the resources of others. So it might better be said that the *language* of world politics is becoming collectivist—but even such a limited event is of profound import for the United States. The main claims of collectivism are for the redistribution of wealth, for equality; hence the preponderance of these claims will now be made upon the United States. They will be made primarily by governments—now the majority of governments—that have proclaimed egalitarian collectivist ideals within their own societies and, finding it difficult or impossible to achieve these ideals within the constraints of their own domestic politics, turn to world politics for relief. They hope to gain resources they can import; if not, they can export the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

blame. This means there is going to be a lot of blame around, for the world is now made up largely of regimes that have made promises, decent and understandable promises, on which they have not been able to deliver so far and on which they are not likely to be able to deliver in the politically relevant future.

Consider India, until recently a great socialist democracy, *the* greatest—the first of the new nations to engage in serious socialist planning, proclaiming collectivist goals. What have been the results? Padma Desai and Jagdish Bhagwati, in a paper presented to the 1974 meeting of the American Economic Association, report: ". . . growing studies of income distribution in the country suggest strongly that the bottom deciles have not improved their consumption levels since planning began and may, in fact, have become worse off." Consider what will have to happen in India for this to change much. It has been noted that in India the growth rate of per-capita income, from 1958 to 1973, or roughly since planning began, has been a respectable 1.7 percent—better than the historic growth rate of Europe in the nineteenth century. And yet at this rate it would take India 120 years to reach the $1,300 divide that in international statistics separates the developed from the underdeveloped nations.

Yeats wrote:

> Parnell came down the road, he said to a cheering man;
> Ireland shall have her freedom and you still break stone.

And this is the hard reality. The world is now almost wholly given over to nations whose governments are committed to social equality and economic growth. But few have much of the former, and even a good deal of the latter produces only slow changes. In this setting, the temptation of governments is to direct attention to inequalities between nations that ascribe national ills to international causes. This argument invariably goes to the matter of economic inequalities, never to inequalities in political and civil liberties. As Theodore A. Sumberg notes, "Freedom and economic growth used to be allies." But somewhere in the postwar period the connection was lost—a change all but unremarked. No

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

national leader engaged in this rhetoric need have any serious concern that his own regime might be found wanting by similar international comparisons addressed to inequalities of liberty. It is the sad but inescapable fact that almost everywhere save in Europe, and a few English-speaking outposts, democratic socialism has become steadily less democratic in the quarter-century since regimes of this order began to be founded in such profusion. We cannot know whether this is because socialism produced demands on government which made democracy impossible; or because that socialism was never nearly so democratic as we thought, and always was marred by Marxist-Leninist authoritarian tendencies; or, as is increasingly proclaimed in places like India, that democracy is a fetish of Western intellectualism and has no place in non-Western societies. What we do know is that the world is now mostly comprised of communist and socialist nations (a distinction persists, and an important one), none of which looks to American democracy as an example of anything desirable. Our economy is envied, but the effective response is not to try to emulate it so much as to try to destroy it. Everywhere, equality is the cry.

To write of this phenomenon with ill-temper or with ridicule is unworthy. Men and women of true decency and honest commitment to social justice find that not only is this the only thing they can safely say, but also that *this is the only way they know how to think.* Especially in the new nations, the received political culture of European socialism just doesn't provide alternative explanations to these problems that have got to be explained. (Latin America, with a different tradition, has nonetheless found a compatible and reinforcing language.) Thus, at the meeting of the Non-Aligned Bureau in Havana in March 1975, the Indian minister of external affairs, Y. B. Chavan, found the world economic situation "on the verge of a crisis of global proportions" and did not hesitate to see the cause for this in the political economy of the developed nations:

> This global phenomenon has been caused mainly by the policies of the developed countries, by their mass production, technology, by their

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prodigal consumption standards, by their growth-mania, by their diversion of resources towards a meaningless arms race and by the rapid depletion of the world's non-renewable raw materials. In the result we have more and more missiles, hair-dryers and tape-recorders, and less and less foodgrains, fertilizers and essential goods.

. . . If the present situation were to continue unchanged, we shall see the rich nations getting richer and the poor nations poorer, while the earth's non-renewable resources disappear.

The fact that liberty seems to be disappearing even faster seems to matter even to men of Chavan's stature. Seemingly for all, the ready answer is available: economic inequality has made freedom impossible. Very simply, at this time, it appears to be a sufficient answer to the question.

Moreover, it has been for some time, which is to say that the rise of collectivist doctrine in Britain and elsewhere ineluctably diminished the independent claim that liberty could make on social arrangements. It is useful to recall that to the liberal nineteenth century, freedom was the *key* to social harmony, including international harmony. Morgenthau records that adherents of free trade, such as Cobden and Proudhon, "were convinced that the removal of trade barriers was the only condition for the establishment of permanent harmony among nations, and might even lead to the disappearance of international politics altogether." Cobden was more than convinced. "Free trade," he pronounced, "is the international law of the Almighty." This confidence did not survive the twentieth century, certainly not in Britain. In 1942, the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party issued a report, "The Old World and the New Society," most likely written by Harold Laski, which made this transition explicit. The war was basically attributed to an "unplanned economic order [which] went into a frenzy of unreasoning nationalism." The capitalist class in Germany and Italy destroyed democracy to protect its privileges. Similar interests elsewhere acted similarly.

It was fear for privileges which, in the epoch of "appeasement," led so many of the corresponding classes in Britain, France and the United States to sympathize with the habits and the purposes of the Fascist and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nazi dictators. . . . They preferred to break the League of Nations rather than risk the overthrow of the forces of privilege in Germany and Italy. . . . All the major evils of the "appeasement period" are directly traceable to the unregulated operation of our economic system.

The report continued: "We have learned from the war that the anarchy of private competition must give way to ordered planning under national control." The nation must own and operate the essential instruments of production. Wartime controls in industry and agriculture must be retained. This would enable "the reorganization of our export trade to proceed in an orderly and balanced way." In commodities, for example, there would be an end to "reckless speculation"—and so through a familiar prescription for economic controls, *but now linked to an international as well as national order*. Thirty-three years later, a Commonwealth Conference convened in Kingston, Jamaica. The Jamaican prime minister, Michael Manley, according to reports, set the tone for the meeting. Since the era of political colonialism was almost at an end, he declared, the time was at hand for the Commonwealth to turn its concerns to "the wide disparities in wealth now existing between different sections of mankind." He noted one recent response to the unregulated operation of the world economic system: "The third world has been driven by its poverty and the inexorable working of the free-trade system to the discovery of the producer association. The Organization of Petroleum [Exporting] Countries has changed fundamental equations of economic power as decisively as did the Industrial Revolution." What the Almighty will think of this is not certain, but what is fairly clear is that the inequality of economic conditions between different nations has become politicized—in the sense that in the community of nations it is a situation which is seen as appropriate for collective political action.

Two further matters seem equally clear. First, the present situation is not going to change very much very fast. *Some* large changes have occurred: the rise of Japan and the decline of Britain. But in the main historic relationships persist, changing only slowly. It has been pointed out that the ratio of per-capita in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

come in America to that in the Soviet Union is today only ever so slightly lower than it was before the Russian Revolution. If the Soviets have not closed the gap in fifty-eight years of intense competitiveness, with a continent to work with, what may be expected for the often artificial, frequently resource-poor new nations of the world? Finally, it should be clear that what the United States faces is a world of communist and socialist regimes—at various times twenty or so nations in the world might be otherwise—in which the language of politics is persistently refractive of any argument that might make American arrangements appear attractive or even legitimate. Ideas, just now, are all against us. How, then, is the American case to be presented? A first point, not that obvious, is that the American case must *be* presented. It no longer speaks for itself, as it may have done in 1945. Others no longer speak for it, as was the case perhaps in 1918. From 1975 on, our competence with ideas and the vigor with which we present and examine them will have consequences for us of a higher order than we are familiar with. It has been remarked that in American foreign policy there has been a tradition of high politics and low politics: high politics being security politics and low politics being those other concerns, at once symbolic and ideological and yet somehow workaday and even drab, which occupy, let us say, most of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

It is, of course, precisely because the ideological disadvantage of the United States is reversed in the case of so many other nations, especially the new ones, that there is so much emphasis on ideological matters in international forums. Here again it is essential to distinguish the socialist from the communist impact on the world scene. American foreign policy could ignore "rhetoric" so long as it was communist, on the repeatedly demonstrated grounds that such rhetoric was not in itself much of a threat. It won no elections. Communism everywhere "came out of a barrel of a gun." (Which only seemed to enhance the "natural" primacy of security politics.) But this was not, and is not, the case with the rhetoric and ideas of nationalist socialism. They have great persuasiveness in the widest range of economic and political settings,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our own included. But like any rhetoric it can be put to distorted and unproductive purposes, and this has been done increasingly in the present world. To ignore it or to deal with it badly is to make matters, in the present situation, worse for ourselves and not better for anyone else, save the elites who manipulate this rhetoric for their own narrow purposes.

Our task is to be compassionate and yet reasoning. It should be seen as a task, an undertaking. It should be seen as something we have not done before. It should not be seen as something we are not likely to do well.

We do not wholly believe our own case. There is the nub of it. If the influence of "American" political ideas in the world reached its high point in 1919, and has declined generally in the world ever since, that influence has declined in America also. It is scarcely elegant to chop up a century into ideological epochs before any one ideology has fully run its course, and yet there is a certain Hegelian structure to the libertarian, totalitarian, collectivist sequence, and in that sequence "American" ideas grow steadily more remote. In the meantime, subsequent waves of doctrine have broken on these shores also, and have had their impact. Thus the Russian Revolution had an enormous, and after a point quite visible, impact on American intellectual life. There was a time—the 1930s, as Robert Warshow has written—when "virtually all intellectual vitality was derived in one way or another from the Communist party." A huge proportion of American intellectuals were within the party orbit; those outside were likely to be in opposition and devoted much of themselves to maintaining that opposition. In its Stalinist form, this doctrine was not only implacably opposed to "American" ideas, it was also viciously illiberal. Lying became a routine tactic, and deceit a normal device; so that when this influence began to move into the universities, as it did after World War II, resistance to it was disorganized and uncomprehending—often save only for the opposition of ex-Communists and others of the Left who had been close enough to the phenomenon to recognize it for what it was. Nonetheless, by the late 1960s the Stalinoid student newspaper was common on campuses everywhere, and remains so. And as the cohort of former communists

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and anticommunist socialists gradually disappears, universities seem even more uncomprehending and undefended than ever.

It would not quite be accurate to say that the wave of collectivist influence came next, as it did in the world at large. In reality, it came first. The American encounter with both socialism and communism has been greatly influenced by immigration, so much so as to be in some ways as much an ethnic phenomenon as an ideological one. Immigrants brought their doctrines with them, or were waiting when doctrine, as it were, followed on the next ship. But socialism was a doctrine not only of continental Europe and suchlike regions of emigration, but of Britain also. Indeed the most prestigious and influential of all socialist movements—the least Marxist, by far the most liberal, and the most brainy—was British socialism, especially Fabian Socialism. More than a doctrine, it was a culture, such that by the early years of the twentieth century, when America was still very much a colony in such matters, merely to be cultured meant to be influenced by socialist doctrine. At a time when still relatively few persons had "read an American book" or in any event "seen an American play," which American—if he saw plays at all—had not seen one by Bernard Shaw? With time—a Fabian mode!—this influence grew and spread. American arrangements changed under the influence: it might not be too much to say they were transformed. The time came in postwar America when avowedly communist ideas had become once again sectarian, at most a marginal influence on the culture. But socialist ideas had by then gained the widest currency, although rarely with socialist labels. Americans were becoming British indeed, willing to change anything but the appearance of things—a sensible arrangement, but not one that makes for intellectual clarity. Expenditure in the public sector, largely for the provision of social services and myriad forms of redistribution, rose to a third of the GNP. But somehow the point was lost as successive national administrations denied they were engaged in any such social transformation. Educated youth began to partake of that curiously dichotomous view of American life to be encountered among the upper-class Left throughout the world. We are seen as a society impacted and near traumatized with mindless mass consumption,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

born of the need for capitalist profit, while simultaneously a society that is near heartless in its treatment of the unpropertied—this too a consequence of capitalist necessity.

All foreseen by Schumpeter! Capitalism, of its own intellectual vitality, would create an intellectual class which in turn would delegitimize it. Could even Schumpeter, however, have foreseen the utter collapse of libertarian defenses in the second half of the twentieth century? The American business system went on doing tolerably well, or better than that, but proved wholly incapable of making a case for itself. It did justifiable things; it could not justify them. It did admirable things; it could not make them seem admirable. Postwar opinion surveys trace a steady, inexorable decline of confidence in corporations, the fundamental economic unit of the society, while baffled corporation executives gathered at Greenbrier to ask why no one spoke up on what is *right* about America. As if in response, their children deserted the business system, and the public sector as a proportion of the Gross National Product rose to a third, and headed for half at the turn of the century.

The symbols of progress, in Samuel Beer's term, had been captured by what was no longer so clearly "the other side." It is important to be precise at this point. There is no necessary sense in which nationalist socialism is to be seen as a doctrine incompatible with American traditions and values. Even to bring up the question suggests that such values and traditions are more precise than in fact they are; it has previously been asserted that there has already been a tremendous incorporation of socialist values and practices. If the United States were to become a socialist democracy in the British manner, nothing indispensable to our society would be lost. Living standards might fail to rise, might decline relatively. The Labour Party report of 1942 noted that Britain was then the second wealthiest nation in the world. Well, that is no longer so, but then the United States is no longer the wealthiest either. The problem is that, in its current manifestations in the world at large, socialist ideology is decidedly anti-American and that, to the degree it informs the policies of a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

majority of the nations of the world, those policies also become anti-American. This is a situation we must seek to reverse, or else have little to complain about if things don't go well.

Further, and more important, there should be no question that the totalitarian powers stand to benefit greatly if relations between the United States and the new socialist nations (including, of course, the increasingly leftist nations of Latin America) become embittered and deadlocked. Prudence requires that we assume the totalitarians could actively be seeking this outcome. If evidence be needed, none could be more persuasive than the declaration adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordination Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries, at which the Indian minister of external affairs spoke in March 1975. The bureau met, to begin with, in the "nonaligned" capital of Havana. The language of the "Declaration of Havana" is totalitarian: "The Bureau greets the people of Cambodia's great and decisive victories over the sieged lackey regime in Phnom Penh. . . ." The United States is anathematized in virtually every paragraph. Western developed countries are enjoined "to cease obstaculizing the United Nations." The Leninist rhetoric of imperialism is nicely folded in with collectivist worries about consumerism.

> The obstinacy of the imperialist powers in preserving the structures of colonial and neocolonial exploitation which nurture their luxurious and superfluous consumer societies while they keep a large part of humanity in misery and hunger. . . .

The entire thrust of the document is to merge the rhetoric of the communist states with that of the socialist ones, and to establish a unity of viewpoint in fundamental opposition to the supposed views and behavior of the United States.

There were genuine democracies present at this meeting as members of the Non-Aligned Bureau. There were a number of reasonably democratic countries on hand as observers. And there were outright communist countries in both groups. It cannot be in the interest of the United States, *nor of these democratic countries,* to be in such company, to join in such declarations. At very least, it is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not in the interest of the United States that it should be. Those not certain of this could do worse than consult the list headed "Delegations from the following *countries* were also present as observers." (My italics.) After the Palestinian Liberation Organization comes the Socialist Party of Puerto Rico. (In point of fact, the communist party.)

There is—or there might well be, and it would be foolish not to entertain the hypothesis—a process at work whereby democratic socialist regimes become less democratic in situations of relative economic decline where disciplined totalitarian cadres on the Left can offer support and influence. Certainly the "emergence" of powerful communist influence in the British trade unions—after years of full employment, socialist governments, a welfare state—at a time when such influence should have been diminishing, has come as something of a surprise. Similarly, in India, a once great socialist democracy finds itself governing in an open coalition with the Communist Party of India, a small group but now one with considerable influence. The danger, of course, is that such groups almost instinctively opt for the old Stalinist tactic, "the worse the better." Wherever they gain influence in democratic socialist regimes they act so as to increase the probability that the regime will fail—in the expectation that they will succeed to power, either directly or in stages. (Those who think this strategy discredited by the German experience might well recall Walter Ulbricht's comfortable life and peaceful death.) Surely it is within the capacity of such communist cadres to see that the prospect of democratic socialist regimes collapsing in the new nations will be considerably "improved" if an antagonistic relationship can be developed with the United States that will cause the United States to withdraw its concern and its support. This process is already visible, and likely to hasten in the aftermath of the Indochina experience. Was it accident, as the old Marxists would ask, that the day after the *New York Times* carried a story from the Commonwealth conference headlined "MRS. GANDHI HAILS VICTORY IN SAIGON," a story from Moscow was headed "MOSCOW APPLAUDS VICTORS IN VIETMAN IN RESTRAINED TONE"?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If it is difficult to see just how the interests of nonaligned countries are served by such statements, it is easy to see how they might serve the interests of the totalitarian nations even more than at first appears. For the long-run effect of uncontrolled rhetoric from the nonaligned, contrasted with rather modulated and subtle responses from the totalitarian centers, *could* create a curious compound tropism. The West as well as the South will find itself turning East. Anything for a kind word. What a fantastic aftermath of the cold war! And yet a possible one. In just this way the United States could find itself responding to the state capitalism of the rest of the world with a state capitalism of its own: nationalized and cartelized economies abroad doing business with a not dissimilar economy here. Pragmatism will have proved our greatest failing, as first one state trading arrangement is worked out, and then another; first one cartel, and then another; with all the movement *away* from the American system. If it were toward a true socialism, a case might be made. But this will nowhere be the case, for nowhere is there socialism. In the communist world and among the new nations what normally obtains are more or less brutal and thoroughly exploitative versions of state capitalism run for the benefit of the new collectivist elite. (Socialism in India, for example, has resulted, as Desai and Bhagwati observe, in a *rentier* economy in which the key class lives off rents obtained from the ubiquitous government license.) This is not, perhaps, what was intended, but then ideologies produce surprises. A point, however, which American negotiators are not likely to perceive, having in the main little sense of the ideologies with which they are dealing, other than to know that they are somehow different and somehow must be dealt with.

We must learn socialism as we once learned communism. There is, after all, a respectable record of our having found ways to comprehend, and eventually to interact with, Marxist-Leninist leaders. We have not much engaged the new nations at the level of ideology. Over and above any sense that we might not come off very well, there was, in American foreign policy circles, a kind of redskin disdain for such paleface maundering. "Drip" was the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

term with which one of the great men of postwar American foreign policy would dismiss the crazy talk, as he saw it, which in the end would lead to such things as quadrupling the price of oil. There was also, possibly, a certain misreading of the "end of ideology" thesis. As Seymour Martin Lipset has now noted:

> What we were referring to was a judgment that the passionate attachments of an integrated revolutionary set of doctrines to the anti-system struggles of working-class movements—and the consequent coherent counter-revolutionary doctrines of some of their opponents—were declining, that they were, to repeat C. Wright Mills' term, "a legacy from Victorian Marxism." They would not reemerge in advanced industrial or "post-industrial societies," although they would continue to exist in the least developed nations.

Well, of course, they have indeed continued, and have grown more intense, in language at the very least. To meet the challenge so presented, low politics are going to have to be elevated somewhat. The United States government now has more than its share of intelligence and energy within its bounds, and more is yet available. But such talent will not be directed to this range of matters unless it is known that the issues are seen to be important. It needs also to be understood within the larger society, and notably within the circles concerned with foreign policy, that to deal with these matters is no longer to court the easy approbation that may once have come from going along with whatever seemed the sentiment of the hour. Not only outside but within the United States, persons charged with this responsibility will encounter suspicion and hostility from just those quarters where they might wish their actions to be most clearly understood and even valued.

One hesitates to prescribe, and yet we are not altogether without experience in coping with such situations. It is an honored maxim of folk medicine that cures are found where maladies arise. Something similar holds in politics. The American response to communism in the world, and within America itself, was enormously informed, even fashioned, by persons who had been near to or even involved with that doctrine. In the present not so very different situation, it is on the Democratic Left that we are most

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

likely to find both informed and unintimidated advocates of a vigorous American role in world affairs, and equally unashamed partisans of American performance. In the clamor of recent years, with so many newer voices and shriller ones raised in protest of one form or another, the social democrats of America have had difficulty being heard. But they are with us now as they were with us before, closely involved with the labor movement, committed to long perspectives in politics, and able somehow to live without overmuch illusion. In a curious way the world struggle between democratic and totalitarian socialism goes on in this country, too. If the essential statement to be made about presenting the American case is that those elements in American society which might most be expected to do this are today the least disposed to do so, and the least able, then the next most important statement is that in the present circumstances the most effective presentation of the American case is likely to come from just those quarters which have been least associated with the celebration of liberal capitalism. It is not that the labor movement and the social democrats like what we have, so much as that they are aware of the alternatives, and acculturated, if the term may be used, to the realm of ideology in which the American case must be presented. In time a foreign service might be trained to this task, but it will be difficult. Its recruits will come from universities where, in the main, the American case is not believed. They will, in the main, be the offspring of a demoralized business class where the American case is not thought to be important. In any event it will be a long task. For the moment we should look to the defenders we have. As in point of fact we are not likely to do this, we must accordingly not expect to be well defended.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

News from the Underworld

(After Blinking One's Way Through "The Detection of Neutral Weak Currents," in *Scientific American*)

JOHN UPDIKE

They haven't found the *W*
wee particle for carrying
the so-called "weak force" yet, but you
can bet they'll find some odder thing.

Neutrinos make a muon when
a proton, comin' through the rye,
hits in a burst of hadrons; then
eureka! γ splits from π

and scintillation counters say
that here a neutral lepton swerved.
Though parity has had its day,
the thing called "strangeness" is preserved.

JOHN UPDIKE is the well-known American novelist. His most recent novel is *A Month of Sundays,* and a collection of essays is scheduled for publication this fall.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Walter Lippmann

RICHARD H. ROVERE

SOMETIME EARLY IN 1950, I was telephoned by a young man who identified himself as a staff member of *Flair*—a soon-to-be defunct magazine designed to appeal to what used to be known as the carriage trade—and asked if I would be interested in writing an article on Walter Lippmann. I was anything but enchanted by the prospect of appearing in that publication, whose principal contribution to world journalism was a hole in the front cover, but I said without hesitation that I would be very much interested. I had long admired Lippmann, but, although I had had some correspondence with him, I had never met him and looked forward to the opportunity of doing so. In time, I met with the editor of *Flair,* Fleur Cowles, in her Manhattan office. Mrs. Cowles was then the wife of Gardner Cowles, president of Cowles Communications, a corporation that owned several newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations in the Midwest. After settling some details about length, deadline, and money, she asked me how I proposed to handle Lippmann's divorce from his first wife and his second marriage. I knew a bit about this—it had been a mild tabloid scandal in 1938—but I told Mrs. Cowles that I had no intention of writing anything about it. I did not propose, I explained, to do Lippmann's biography, only an appraisal of his career and its impact on American politics and journalism. If gossip was what she wanted, she had better get in touch with Walter Winchell or Hedda Hopper, two eminent practitioners of the trade. She took this with reasonably good grace, and by the end of the summer I had completed the article. It appeared in the last issue of *Flair,* and among my souvenirs is a copy of the magazine with her signature framed in the aperture.

RICHARD H. ROVERE is a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and author of several books, including *Waist Deep in the Big Muddy* and *Senator Joe McCarthy.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soon after reaching agreement with the editor, I had written Lippmann, notifying him of my assignment. He replied that, while he did not care much for publicity, he would be pleased to see me at his summer home on Mount Desert Island, Maine. I found him gracious, less formal than I had expected, and one of the most stimulating conversationalists I have ever known. We remained good friends for almost the last quarter-century of his life. (I did not see him in the months before his death on December 20, 1974.) I cannot, however, say that ours, at least on my part, was an altogether easy relationship. At our first meeting, I was thirty-five, and he was sixty-one, just my father's age. Perhaps because he had no children (only a stepdaughter, child of the former Helen Byrne Armstrong), it seemed to me that he often treated me rather like a son in need of instruction and guidance. This may have been partly my imagining, but others of my approximate age have told me they had the same feeling. As a consequence, I was somewhat more deferential than is normally my custom, and I tended not to challenge any of his views with the vigor I might have employed with a contemporary. But this was hardly a matter of importance, certainly not when measured against the fact that I had the opportunity to learn from a great teacher.

The side of Lippmann that I, like most people, was mainly aware of was the lucid analyst of men and events. But I soon became fascinated by other aspects as well. His interests were much broader than many people, even friends, realized. Before Lincoln Steffens snatched him away from Harvard and tried to make him a junior muckraker, he had planned to become an art historian. When he was a student at Dr. Julius Sachs Collegiate Academy in Manhattan, his parents took him to Europe, where, still in knee pants, he became a habitué of museums and cathedrals. Strolling through the Louvre one day, he came upon Mrs. Jack Gardner, the quintessential American art collector. This meeting led in turn to a lifelong friendship with Bernard Berenson, who became one of Lippmann's few real confidants. His passion for art—particularly classical art—never left him. He was also much interested in literature, philosophy, psychology, and theology. In the early twenties, he contributed some quite dazzling

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

literary criticism to *Vanity Fair* and other magazines. (Some of this work, along with several political essays, is to be found in *Men of Destiny*, a book long out of print but one of his finest and by far the most entertaining. His appraisals of Sinclair Lewis and H. L. Mencken, written when both men were at the height of their vogue, are as perceptive as any done since and are, in places, extremely funny.)

Lippmann had been a protégé of George Santayana, and his undergraduate writing had attracted the attention of William James. His first book, *A Preface to Politics*, was published when he was twenty-five. It was proclaimed by Ernest Jones, Sigmund Freud's leading disciple and first biographer, as the first Freudian treatment of politics. Hearing this, Freud said he wanted to meet Lippmann; they met once, in Vienna, but had no opportunity for conversation. Theodore Roosevelt read the book while hunting in the jungles of Brazil and expressed the same wish. He and Lippmann did meet, and for many years Roosevelt was Lippmann's ideal of a public man.

In this country, Lippmann was thought of primarily as a force in journalism and politics. Few regarded him as much of an influence in American intellectual life, but in Europe, at least in the early days, he was seen as a substantial figure in the intellectual community. Soon after leaving college he went to England and got to know many of the country's intellectual elite, among them H. G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Lytton Strachey, John Maynard Keynes, Harold Nicolson, and Rebecca West. He became a card-carrying member of the Fabian Society, and, as an editor of the *New Republic* and a talent scout for Harcourt Brace, he recruited many of its members for the magazine and the publishing house. His interest in religion was a continuing one. He discussed it with me only in the most academic terms, telling me of a plan to write a book about it. I have often been told, however, that at one point he seriously considered becoming a communicant of the Roman Catholic church. Whether or not this is true, one finds many touches of neo-Thomist thought in his writings.

A facet of his character that was even more deeply concealed from the public was his political activism. Indeed, whenever he ad-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vised other journalists on the duties and obligations of their profession, he would stress the necessity for keeping their distance from persons in public life. Fraternizing with politicians, he insisted, was destructive of circumspection. Addressing the International Press Institute in London in May 1965, he said:

> The powerful are perhaps the chief sources of the news, but they are also the dispensers of many kinds of favors, privilege, honor, and self-esteem. . . . The most important form of corruption in the modern journalist's world are the many guises and disguises of social climbing on the pyramids of power.

And two years later he wrote:

> Cronyism is the curse of journalism. After many years, I have reached the firm conclusion that it is impossible for an objective newspaperman to be a friend of a President. Cronyism is a sure sign that something is wrong and that the public is not getting the whole journalistic truth.

His practice, however, was far from his preaching. Throughout his half-century as a publicist, he intervened in government affairs far more frequently than did most of his colleagues. In the early years, he did so openly; in the later years, surreptitiously. In 1915 and 1916, he lobbied furiously for Senate confirmation of Louis D. Brandeis as associate justice of the Supreme Court. Although Brandeis, a labor lawyer from Massachusetts and one of the great American jurists, was Woodrow Wilson's choice, he had precious little support from other quarters—in fact a great deal of opposition. The common view, shared by many Democrats, by most Republicans, and by such generally enlightened organs as the *Nation* and the *New York Times,* was that his years as a labor advocate had made him a partisan and hence disqualified him for the high Court. But Lippmann and Felix Frankfurter (who himself became an associate justice three decades later) were for Brandeis, as was the *New Republic,* of which Lippmann was a founder and editor. About the only other journalistic support came from some small Populist papers in the Midwest and West, and a few trade-union journals. The struggle was hard and bitter. The fuss about

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brandeis's past—in large part a cover for anti-Semitism—was led by former President William Howard Taft, then at the Yale Law School and bitter because he had not been appointed to the Court by the man he succeeded as president. (He was later, of course, to become chief justice.) In letters, articles, and conversations, Lippmann and Frankfurter worked tirelessly for Brandeis, who was confirmed only after prolonged and rancorous hearings. It was, perhaps, Lippmann's greatest triumph.

During the First World War, Lippmann was commissioned as a captain in the army and served at General John J. Pershing's field headquarters. He contributed much to the modernization of psychological warfare—not the most attractive military field but certainly the least lethal one. As that war drew to an end, Colonel Edward M. House, President Wilson's principal political strategist, asked him to join the staff of the Inquiry, a nongovernmental and largely clandestine outfit that had been established—largely as a response to the British and French secret treaties with other powers—to draw up American peace terms. This was the group that compiled Wilson's noble but doomed Fourteen Points. Its putative head was Isaiah Bowman, a noted geographer and president of the American Geographical Society, not to be confused with the National Geographic Society. Most of the work, though, was done by Lippmann as executive secretary, and eight of the Fourteen Points were his. Wilson's six points dealt with such abstractions as the freedom of the seas, the self-determination of peoples, and so on; Lippmann's were the hard, substantive ones, dealing with frontiers, demographics, and sovereignties. While working on boundaries, he went to the State Department's Balkan desk and found that the people in green eyeshades and shirtsleeves there were using maps published in 1870. Back in the American Geographical Society's headquarters, he, under Bowman's occasional tutelage, gave himself a cram course in geography; in time he knew as much about it as did Sir Halford John Mackinder, the British student of geopolitics whose ideas were perverted by Hitler for his *Lebensraum* policies. The experience became central to Lippmann's political thinking; it was an enduring concept of his that on the baize-covered negotiating

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tables nations never yield so much as a kilometer that has not been won on the Champs de Mars. The idea was to serve him well in later years and later wars.

In 1919, Lippmann went to the Paris Peace Conference, ostensibly as a public relations man for the Fourteen Points and for the president who was backing them. To him, as to many others, the Treaty of Versailles was a disillusioning experience. But he was not quite ready to give up his overt interventions.

In 1927, when the Mexican government nationalized the oil industry, Lippmann, like many others, foresaw the possibility of another war between Mexico and this country. As a way to head off any such development, he persuaded President Calvin Coolidge to appoint their common friend, Dwight Morrow, as ambassador to Mexico, knowing full well that Morrow would make Lippmann his deputy. As he told it, it all came about as he had expected. The sovereignties involved were Mexico, the United States, and the Vatican, which was at the time distressed over the anticlericalism of the Mexican government and inclined to be partial to its opponents. Lippmann played by far the largest part in the crisis. He wrote letters to be sent from President Coolidge to the Mexican president, General Plutarco Elias Calles, and vice versa. He wrote letters for both to send off to the pope and for the pope to dispatch to the two presidents. The whole performance was widely admired, and it did avert the possibility of war. When the crisis was past, Lippmann thought of a way to create a festive atmosphere: to have Charles A. Lindbergh, who had just made the first nonstop flight across the Atlantic, come to Mexico on a goodwill flight to visit several of its cities. Lindbergh accepted the proposal and in the American Embassy he met the ambassador's family—including his daughter, Anne, who later became Mrs. Lindbergh.

After that episode, Lippmann seldom showed his hand in public affairs, but he never ceased to be active. He constantly—often without solicitation—offered his advice on appointments and policies. He helped write speeches and put ideas into heads that were largely barren of them. Reading his correspondence now preserved at Yale, I learned that he was in large part the creator of Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan. Vandenberg was a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

midwestern Republican isolationist who, at a critical moment in World War II, became an internationalist and politically a bipartisan. His conversion brought him a reputation as a statesman and celebrity that he much enjoyed, both here and abroad. Two Democratic presidents sent him to international conferences all over Europe and to the 1945 San Francisco Conference that established the United Nations. In reality, Vandenberg was a run-of-the-mill politician and a rather clownish one at that. But Lippmann, in collaboration with James Reston of the *New York Times,* talked him into his new position and provided him with some rather elegant language in which to express it. Lippmann was helpful in similar ways to many others—among them Alf Landon, Dwight Eisenhower, John Foster and Allen Dulles, Adlai Stevenson, and Lyndon Johnson—although none of these needed to be invented, as Vandenberg did. All of them profited by their association ("cronyism" is doubtless too strong a word, though in some cases it amounted to that) with Lippmann.

His last interventions were with John F. Kennedy. Lippmann had held off backing Kennedy until late in the 1960 campaign. He had nothing personal against the Democratic candidate, but he was distrustful of anyone connected with Joseph P. Kennedy, the candidate's father, who had been his close friend until late in Kennedy's tenure as American ambassador in London. At that point, Lippmann came to think of Kennedy as pro-Nazi, and they were friends no longer. But he did in time come to support the Democratic candidate, and he watched with interest as John F. Kennedy, after his election, formed a cabinet. When he learned that the president-elect was considering the appointment of Dean Rusk as secretary of state, he did all he could to prevent it. I do not know whether he had any personal animosity toward Rusk, but he certainly had political animosity—based in large part on Rusk's bellicose behavior at the time of the war in Korea, a conflict that Lippmann opposed from the start. His choice for secretary of state was McGeorge Bundy, who, as it turned out, would hardly have pleased him either, since Bundy was for many years an ardent backer of Rusk's policies.

On another important occasion in this pre-inauguration period,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lippmann did prevail over Kennedy. Having almost completed the final draft of the speech he was to deliver after taking the oath of office, the president-elect took it to Lippmann's house to get his advice and consent. Lippmann advised but did not consent. He objected to Kennedy's use of the word "enemy" to characterize the Soviet Union, and suggested that it be changed to "adversary." Kennedy accepted this; it was a small change but an important one, and the fact that it was cheerfully made showed something about Kennedy's approach to U.S.-USSR relations.

I had known Lippmann for about fifteen years before I was aware that he was much more than the standoffish political journalist known to the public. His services to President Wilson were, to be sure, a matter of public record (though his work on the Fourteen Points is still, as far as I am aware, known only to a few historians)—as was his brief service to the Socialist mayor of Schenectady, New York, shortly after leaving college. But I did not know the extent of his involvement in other matters until I gained access to his papers at Yale. (They were deposited there rather than at Harvard because a young businessman, Robert Anthony, had started a Lippmann collection of his own in his undergraduate days. When Lippmann learned of this, he added everything he could to it, and made Anthony the curator.)

This research at Yale came about while I was gathering material for a biography of Lippmann. For many years, publishers had urged him to write his autobiography, but he insisted that he would never do it. In 1950, he was persuaded by Allan Nevins, a colleague of his on the *New York World* in the twenties and head of the Oral History Project at Columbia University, to record a series of interviews about his life, but the transcript, though valuable, is an incomplete and in some ways unsatisfactory document. When some friends—particularly his publisher, Edward Weeks, of Atlantic-Little Brown, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.—realized that further efforts at getting him to do an autobiography were futile, they cast about for a biographer. I do not know what other writers they approached, but in time I was asked to do the job, and accepted. At the start, he was agreeable but rather diffident. When I

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

asked him about letters, he said that he had never been much of a correspondent and that, besides, someone had stolen many letters from his files. (This was true, but the letters ended up in the hands of a book dealer; they were bought by a friend of Lippmann's and returned to his files.) Did he have diaries? Only appointment books, he said—not very interesting. But after I got into the archives at Yale, I quickly found that he was wrong on both counts. There were a great many letters, some of them fascinating. As for the appointment books, they were more than just that. Whenever any meeting seemed worth more than a note about the place and time, he would summarize the discussion in his tiny, cramped hand. And when he went abroad, he would dictate an account of each day's events to Mrs. Lippmann. A two-week trip would sometimes yield as much as two hundred typed pages. My awareness of this material, and of the light it cast on little-known aspects of Lippmann and of American life early in the century, led me to a procedural decision: to focus on him as an active participant in the political and social life of the time rather than as a political writer and thinker. His books and columns were interesting, but they could be dealt with by scholars whose main interest was in the content of his thought.

I do not know if I ever successfully communicated my idea to Lippmann, but I did discuss it with Weeks and Schlesinger, and they agreed with me. In my talks with Lippmann, therefore, I tried to concentrate on events rather than on political judgments. I also tried to bring the Nevins oral history up to date in taped interviews of my own.

I think that what I was trying to do was sound in principle, yet in practice it did not work. Although I have never been particularly adept as an interviewer, in this case I do not think the fault was altogether my own. At least in his later years, Lippmann was a man with what I can only describe as a profound distaste for the past—not the historical past, which delighted him, but his own past. This did not, I am sure, rest on any dissatisfaction with his professional career and his private life; both, to the best of my knowledge, had been satisfying to him. It was more a matter of a single-minded focus on the present and future, which a man could

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

attempt to mold, as he could not do with the past. This might have been a healthy attitude in a person as vigorous and busy as Lippmann was, but it was frustrating to a biographer, since a biographer deals only with the past. Most of the time, when I asked him to reminisce, he had difficulty summoning up details. Moreover, I learned that he had a very unreliable memory. His recollection of events was frequently contradicted by the evidence in contemporary letters and diaries, and before long I realized I could not use anything that was not confirmed in documents or by other people.

There were further difficulties. We had trouble agreeing on the terms of our collaboration. I was uneasy in the role of authorized biographer. I felt that I needed complete independence, and he always said that he, in a similar position, would settle for nothing less. I think, though, that he was troubled by the thought that I would find in the letters something either discreditable or of so private a nature that he would not want it revealed. I told him I thought his concern was groundless. For one thing, I had no intention of going into matters that were not part of the public's concern. For another, I had read enough of the letters and diaries to learn that he had a highly developed sense of privacy and never wrote of his private life to others. (He came close to doing this with Berenson, but the details he confided were mainly financial.) I also assured him that I would show the completed manuscript to him and to anyone else he would like to have read it. I said that I would, of course, take most seriously and sympathetically any objections raised, and if his definition of privacy differed from mine, I would almost certainly accept his. I twice put a statement of all this into writing and submitted it to Louis Auchincloss, Lippmann's lawyer and a distinguished novelist. Both times, Lippmann said that he agreed and that all final decisions about content should be up to me. But then he would again be assailed by doubts. Once he proposed that we jointly appoint a board of arbitrators consisting of three men who were friends of his and of mine. Knowing whom he had in mind, I might have been able to accept the proposal, aware that the only trouble I would have would be the loss of time. But I didn't like the principle, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neither did at least two of the three proposed judges when I told them of it. In fact, they said they would have nothing to do with it. I did not speak to the third.

I foresaw another problem. Lippmann's health grew poorer, and I thought it likely that he would die before I finished my work. Mrs. Lippmann, who was eight years younger than he, could have been expected to outlive him, and not consider herself bound by the agreements (oral on his part) we had reached. But actually she died several months before he did. At any rate, I decided to turn the project over to a younger writer, a man who could make a fresh start. I found an ideal successor in Ronald Steel, who had been a foreign service officer and was starting a career as a journalist. He consented, and he is, he tells me, approaching the end of what I am sure will be a book worthy of the subject.

For several years after I turned the job over to Steel, Lippmann and I continued to be friends. He was a delightful companion, always entertaining and often, in conversation, as amusing as were those early literary criticisms I have mentioned. He had powerful likes and dislikes—a fact that I myself might have appeared to contradict in writing of him elsewhere. I quoted a famous exchange between him and Mabel Dodge Luhan, the mistress of a sumptuous salon in Greenwich Village, circa 1912. "What do you love?" Mrs. Luhan once asked him, to which he instantly replied, "The living world." I rather rashly added the comment, "He liked everything." That was hyperbole; if it were not, he would not have been the man he was. What he meant, of course, was that he liked the experience of living and working and being part of his time. Life had been good to him in almost every way, and he had served his country—and, by extension, other peoples—as perhaps no other journalist of the century has done. But he did not like everything, and he obviously did not like everybody. Although his mind was firmly fixed in the liberal tradition, he was essentially conservative—not in the sense of resisting change but in the sense of approaching it prudently and circumspectly. He liked order in life and society. He was skeptical of many democratic values and would, I think, have felt at home in a society in which hierarchies

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were more clearly defined than they are in this country. In 1956 he published a book, *The Public Philosophy,* in which he argued that too much authority was vested in representative bodies such as Congress, and too little in offices of consolidated leadership such as the presidency. It seemed to me, and to many others who reviewed the book, that the trend was the opposite of what he held it to be. In this country, the executive branch was steadily gaining power at the expense of the legislative branch. I did not think that this was altogether bad, nor did most other critics; we simply felt that he had misjudged developments. The book got few favorable reviews, and he was so hurt by this that he gave up work for a few months.

I had a rather odd experience as a consequence of my own review of the book in *The New Yorker.* While I was critical of it, I paid tribute to Lippmann as a thinker and to the high quality of his other work. One day, soon after the review was published, I met the late Edmund Wilson in the corridor outside my office. He stopped me and said he had been terribly disappointed by my review. Assuming he had read the book and liked it better than I had, I asked him what he himself had liked in it. He said he hadn't read it, but had been put off by my general praise of Lippmann. I said that I admired the man very much, particularly in his latest phase, when he was bedeviling Eisenhower and Dulles for their foreign policy. "Have you been reading him lately, Mr. Wilson?" I asked. "Of course not," he said. "I haven't read him since 1926, when I discovered that he was an agent of the House of Morgan."

This was a frequent charge, by liberals and radicals, against Lippmann in the decades before World War II, and Wilson's remark led me to think about it and look into it. There was a sense, a rather innocent one, in which the charge was true. In the twenties and thirties he, like many other columnists, was writing about economics and finance. Of economics he had a fine grasp, but he was an amateur in finance and needed expert help. In those days it was just about useless to consult anyone in Washington about such matters. The Treasury Department people were mostly businessmen who knew less about economics than he and not much about finance. At least until the New Deal, all the financial

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

experts were in Wall Street. Lippmann readily consulted the bankers there, particularly Russell Leffingwell, a Morgan partner. As it happened, Leffingwell was a liberal Democrat and, like most New York bankers, an internationalist. In the correspondence, I found instance after instance in which Lippmann had written Leffingwell asking him to explain and give his opinion on some current dispute. Leffingwell would oblige, giving a lengthy analysis—and not, so far as I could tell, a partisan one—and in a few days, that response, shortened and paraphrased, would turn up in Lippmann's column, "Today and Tomorrow," in the *New York Herald Tribune*. By inadvertence, perhaps, some of Lippmann's writings may have served the interest of the Morgan people, but "agent" was far too strong a word for the relationship.

Lippmann's association with the Morgan partners was often faulted on another ground altogether, particularly by fellow Jews who objected to his close association with what was, in the current parlance, a notoriously WASP firm. Lippmann had, after all, grown up in a Jewish community that had produced any number of distinguished bankers, some of whom he had attended school and college with—Kuhns, Loebs, Lehmans, and many others. He was frequently accused of anti-Semitism. In this, I am afraid, there was a modicum of truth. He was a German Jew whose family, a rather wealthy and cultivated one, had immigrated fifty years earlier than most of the East European (mainly Russian and Polish) Jews, and he shared some of the disdain of the one tribe for the other. He was never, to be sure, overtly hostile in what he wrote, but it was notable that he seldom wrote about Jewish questions and had rather little sympathy for Israel. He never visited that country, but he did visit Egypt under the Nasser regime, and the fact that he was allowed to do so says something about that government's attitude toward him. I know of only one instance in which he addressed himself to the condition of American Jews—an article entitled "Public Opinion and the American Jew," published in the *American Hebrew* in April 1922:

> The fundamental fact in the situation [the rise in anti-Semitism in the early twenties] is that the Jews are fairly distinct in their physical ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pearance and in the spelling of their names. They are, therefore, inevitably conspicuous. . . . Thus, while the Jews are not sharper traders than the Greeks or the Scotch, and while they are not more blatantly vulgar-rich than among other stocks, sharp trading and blatant vulgarity are more conspicuous in the Jew because he himself is more conspicuous. . . . [T]he rich and vulgar and pretentious Jews of our big American cities are perhaps the greatest misfortune that has ever befallen the Jewish people. . . . I worry about the Jewish smart set in New York. . . . They can in one minute unmake more respect and decent human kindness than Einstein or Brandeis could make. . . . That is the real problem of the Jew in America, the problem of his use of his opportunities. . . . What the American Jew needs is to develop the habit of self-criticism.

This begs several questions. Other ethnic groups are distinguished by physical features and the spelling of names. In the latter case, the Jews can hardly be said to be more "conspicuous" than, say, the Greeks. Why should the "vulgarity" of Jews stand out in contrast to that of anyone else? I think he was trying to get at what I consider a valid point, which is that what I call "otherness"—in appearance, culture, religion, language, behavior—is often the true explanation of racism. But the Jews are hardly unique. When I was a child in Brooklyn—living in a mixed WASP-Jewish neighborhood—both groups feared and loathed the Italians in an adjoining neighborhood and assumed that no Italians were worthy of respect. Lippmann's fallacy, it seems to me, was his failure to recognize that anti-Semitism had deeper roots than mere "conspicuous" differences.

But the failing was a common one of the time, and Lippmann was not, of course, anti-Semitic in any of his personal relationships. As I have noted, he made a valiant fight against the anti-Semites who tried to bar Brandeis's appointment to the Supreme Court.

Until 1938 Lippmann lived in New York. It was his native city. His principal journalistic associations had always been with New York publications—the *World*, the *New Republic*, the *Herald Tribune*. New Yorkers, as I have pointed out, were better informed on many of the matters that concerned him than persons he might have consulted in Washington. New York was, as in most respects

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it still is, the intellectual capital of the country. But Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal brought to Washington many people of a caliber rarely seen in preceding administrations—economists, historians, scientists, scholars of many kinds, not least among them his friend Felix Frankfurter. The foreign service was recruiting brilliant young men, as were most agencies of the executive branch, including the Treasury, which took on a number of Lippmann's Wall Street friends. Although Lippmann was by no means an enthusiastic New Dealer, he began to find the Washington climate intellectually more stimulating than he had ever known it to be. He lived there until 1968, when he and his wife returned to New York.

At the time, he explained the move as "coming home." It was more than that. He moved because he could not stand the proximity to Lyndon Johnson. His dislike for the president was uncharacteristically passionate, amounting indeed to hatred. The two had once been friends, and the Lippmanns had visited the Johnsons at the LBJ Ranch. But the war in Vietnam outraged Lippmann as nothing ever had before, and in time every facet of Johnson's personality became offensive to him. He made much of Johnson's Texas background (which always struck me as being largely an affectation, since Johnson, except in accent, was far more a product of Washington than of Texas and clung to the ways of his youth largely to give himself identity). He would often say something like, "What can you expect of a Texas jingo?"—a purely rhetorical question.

But withdrawal of support for a president he had earlier backed was a habit with Lippmann. Some incumbents, of course, he had never backed in the first place; but, except for Wilson, who could not be faulted for his terminal illness, he ended up hostile to every president from the first Roosevelt to Richard Nixon. He was a bit of an idealist: he expected more from those he chose to favor than they could possibly deliver, and disappointment was thus inevitable. In commitment and subsequent alienation, he was perhaps little different from other journalists, except that he was one of the few who made public endorsements. With other journalists, it is generally possible to tell from the tone of their work whom they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

favor, but few feel impelled to announce their support publicly, thus averting any need to announce their withdrawal of it. But I suppose Lippmann's practice of declaring himself was a function of his activist side.

One of the warmest and most sensitive of the tributes paid him after his death was by James M. Cain in the *Washington Post*. Cain, author of the classic *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and other novels, had worked under Lippmann on the *World* in the early twenties and had observed sides of him that I had not, although I assumed they existed. One was his perfectionism, sometimes carried a bit far, in the matter of writing. Once, for example, something of his that appeared in the *Washington Post* contained a sentence urging the country to revert to the "*status quo.*" Seeing this in print, he shot off a letter to the editor of the paper asserting that his copy had been manhandled, and that the phrase should have read "*statu quo.*" Cain thought this nitpicking. "True, the dative use of *status,* in Latin, is *statu,* but who cuts it so thin?" At the same time, Cain was pleased to be "working for one man in the newspaper business to whom such things mattered." And he goes on to explain that it was his, Cain's, own passion for rhetoric that led Lippmann to hire him for the *World*'s editorial page in the first place. "As he told me later, when we compared notes, 'When my ear caught the participles that didn't dangle, the infinitives well buttoned in, the pronouns all with antecedents, it occurred to me that you could take [Maxwell] Anderson's place.' " In similar circumstances, I should have felt the same way. Purism was characteristic of Lippmann, in substance as well as in form. There were times when he may have had a poor case or none at all, but he rarely overstated or understated.

Another aspect of Lippmann that did not strike me until I read Cain's article was his physical strength and grace, even though I had been impressed by his vigor. Into the last decade of his life, he was a tennis enthusiast, regularly playing with competence a game that I had given up in my thirties. When I first met him in Maine, he was a tireless walker, and despite being twenty-six years younger, I had a hard time keeping up with him. Cain cites an instance in which Lippmann's strength saved his subordinate's life.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The two were on the sidewalk in front of the Pulitzer Building, where they both worked, and Lippmann said, "Jim, I think it's up to the few to keep civilization from being torn down by the many. Don't you?" Cain was startled by this remark, as well he might have been. "I was so astonished my head snapped around, and at that moment this iron hand caught my arm, to pull me, almost lift me, back from the curb, as a taxi shot by within inches. If it hadn't been for that hand, I would have been killed. It was that kind of hand, and he was that kind of man."

The remark that threw Cain off balance seems perfectly in character. Lippmann was an elitist. When he was misled, it was almost always because of an undue respect for established authority. The most famous case was in 1927, when he accepted uncritically a report by the Lowell Commission (chaired by A. Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard) on the verdict that led to the execution of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Massachusetts radicals charged with payroll robbery and murder. The commission had been appointed by the governor of Massachusetts and was staffed by the kind of persons—New Englanders, Harvard men, estimable public servants—in whom Lippmann had an instinctive trust. It led to an ugly rupture of relations between him and Heywood Broun, another ornament of the profession, who refused to accept the report and was forced to leave the *World*. In time, it was revealed that the report was riddled with simple factual errors—some of the commissioners had not even read the transcript of the testimony—and Lippmann quickly and apologetically reversed himself, but by then the damage was done. One more example: In 1949, when Alger Hiss, a former State Department official, was accused by many of treason and was tried in federal court for perjury, I spent an afternoon walking with Lippmann in Washington. We were discussing the case, and he said, "I know Alger Hiss. He couldn't be guilty of treason." I said that I didn't understand his use of the word "couldn't." I said that, without judging the merits of the case, it seemed to me that anyone was capable of treason, depending on how the term was used. I pointed out that if I told him someone had betrayed a friend, or a wife, or a husband, he would probably accept the state-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment as true and, since that sort of thing happens every day, think nothing more of it. In my view, I went on, betraying a fellow human being is never justifiable, whereas betraying a government may be an act of virtue, as I thought he must assume it was in this country in the colonial period or in the case of those Germans who plotted Hitler's destruction. I added that in the not impossible event that I became convinced that my countrymen would be served by an act of treason, I would, if I could summon up the courage to face the consequences, commit one. I am sure I made no impression on him.

If any man was a member in good standing of the Establishment, Lippmann was. But he served it well and, with few exceptions, critically. When he discovered that he had made an error of judgment, he was quick to acknowledge it. And he made far fewer mistakes, even of prophecy, than his detractors have claimed. Back in the sixties, the Pentagon, whose operations he was criticizing in almost every column, put some researchers to work on his writings over the years and circulated a document detailing what the military men regarded as faulty appraisals and forecasts. In some cases, the Pentagon was itself misinformed as to his opinions; in others, the errors were trivial. One mistake that was far from trivial was his 1968 estimate of Nixon. In early October of that year, following his customary procedure in presidential elections, Lippmann endorsed the Republican candidate and announced his acceptance of the view that a "new Nixon" had emerged. (By my count, this would be at least the eighth announced incarnation.) "I believe," he wrote, "that there really is a 'new Nixon,' a maturer and mellower man who is no longer clawing his way to the top, and it is, I think, fair to hope that his dominating ambition will be to become a two-term president. He is bright enough to know that this will be impossible if he remains sunk in the Vietnam quagmire. . . . And at home, he must, as he knows well, move out to find common ground with the active minorities who are dividing and might paralyze the nation." It did not take him long to recognize and regret this spectacular misjudgment.

Reviewing his work as a whole, I found most of it stood up far better than I had expected it to. I recall rereading, about ten years

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ago, two of his books—*U.S. War Aims* and *U.S. Foreign Policy*—published in the war years of 1944 and 1943. I approached them with the expectation that they would be full of false assumptions about the future. They were, for one thing, prenuclear. They were written before the communist domination of China and the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe and before the formation of the United Nations. Yet Lippmann, drawing on his geographical theories, foresaw that the Soviets would establish a military and political presence from the Baltic states to the Balkans. He recognized the instability of the Chinese Nationalist government. And when the Truman Doctrine—a kind of global application of George Kennan's "containment" thesis—was promulgated, he saw its dreadful consequences immediately.

But I think something valuable would be lost if we thought of him simply as a pillar of social and political wisdom. He was far more than that. He embodied most of what was best in the liberal and humanist traditions. He brought a new dignity to American journalism and practiced it as if it were one of the learned professions. As a stylist, he should be studied not only by other journalists but by anyone interested in English prose, for he was surely as much a master of it as any modern American writer. As a human being, he had human failings, but they were fewer by far than those of most of his contemporaries.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Popular Culture All Around Us

SONYA RUDIKOFF

CONSIDER A NUMBER OF OBJECTS found in a workroom: photographs of two children in a summer scene; a pencil sharpener in the shape of a panda munching bamboo; a stapler; a small standing picture of a squirrel in a tree from the Unicorn tapestries; a box of Kleenex; a painted Indian box; an Early American spice chest; a collage of pictures from a calendar; a Chippendale chair; a fringed afghan crocheted out of 154 squares, no two alike; a Victorian chaise longue with tufted back; a picture by Hans Hofmann; a sewing machine and, on the wall above it, complete instructions for making a Givenchy dress; a steam iron; a picture by Arthur Dove; a French straw trunk containing lengths of orlon acrylic jersey, Qiana twill, polyester gabardine. An entire history of culture and its transformations is implied in this assortment, even if it is not found in Sicily, Ireland, or near Lake Baikal.

Matthew Arnold, revising *Culture and Anarchy* in 1875, would find some of these objects familiar. The photographs, for example, present vivid faces that, although unique and unrepeatable, could nevertheless be multiplied innumerable times, thanks to a process perfected in the past hundred years. Four or five copies were made from these negatives, but four hundred could have been made if the children had been tribal cult figures in one of the primitive cultures revealed to us by anthropologists since Arnold's day, or four million or billion if they had been film stars beloved of multitudes, instead of merely two real children. The panda pencil sharpener was a gift from one of them: it is not any specific panda, but a popular souvenir made in China and sold in the United States by the tens of thousands to commemorate the pandas at the Washington Zoo. The metal stapler, produced in the millions, is neither an image, nor a souvenir, nor a symbol, but a popular

SONYA RUDIKOFF's articles have appeared in *Commentary,* the *Hudson Review, Dissent,* and other journals.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

modern tool. The squirrel is a mechanically produced copy of an image from a medieval work of art, a unique set of tapestries which can be seen in New York at the Cloisters, but are available anywhere in the world in photographs or slides. And anyone can have tapestries now, not just kings or noblemen: they can be made by machine, in modern colors, in modern artists' designs, or from copies of old designs, with old colors exactly reproduced. The spice chest, a gift, is just such a copy, with cracks, irregularities, and "distressed finish," to make it look more real than an original. Now, instead of spices, it holds paper clips and rubber bands. Spices are popular everywhere; they are now available in glass jars or metal boxes, but the colonial past of home-grown spices and pomander balls is our national legacy. The Indian box is a genuine handmade object sold around the world for sums equivalent to the average annual wage of an Indian villager. An AM/FM radio nearby, of the kind popular with millions, brings forth at will the Rolling Stones, Stockhausen, Barbra Streisand, or Alka-Seltzer or General Tire advertisements, and, on Sunday, any number of hymns and sermons.

Anyone who had been to the Crystal Palace in 1851, or the Philadelphia Centennial, would have had no trouble understanding the steam iron or the stapler. And of course by then the sewing machine and the textile factory had transformed domestic life so profoundly that whether the cloth was calico or polyester would have mattered less than the mechanical process that provided it. *Paper* handkerchiefs, from a box? Perhaps no more difficult than the paper dress patterns, except for the extent of mass literacy that made feasible the mass distribution of both. The Chippendale chair? Too old-fashioned, but not really old enough, not Jacobean or Gothic. The afghan? A familiar example of family handiwork popular for centuries, made by a sister, a mother, or a grandmother.

What really might have surprised Arnold (apart from the two modern pictures) is the collage, made by a young man during a school vacation. Collage—that old technique of pasting bits of paper together, the great discovery of advanced painters in the early twentieth century, used by them for interesting aesthetic ex-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plorations, and now taught in every school art or crafts class, even in kindergarten! Would the Victorian school inspector have envisaged the incredible swiftness of cultural diffusion that is now commonplace, as every idea or technique of advanced art becomes quickly assimilated into school curriculums and the general culture? Could Arnold have imagined the enormous arts-and-crafts movement of today? Of course, the crafts, hobbies, sports, travel, entertainments, self-improvement, and other pursuits were known before, but only to the middle class, never on such a popular scale, and never so mechanized, so universally available. The radio symbolizes the difference. Could Arnold, could anyone, have conceived of the mass media, the advertising, all the energies that power an unprecedented distribution of artifacts and a general cultivation of tastes? And accomplished so soon—before the arrival of the Golden Age?

Even to talk knowingly of popular culture shows how much separates us from the past. For centuries, culture was a subject to be thought about, and, ever since Perrault and Dryden, literate people were interested in the quarrel between ancients and moderns, and in the links between culture and society, although without perhaps being so intensely conscious of themselves in the act of discussing culture. That we can contemplate cultural artifacts which are not to our own taste, nor even intended to be, that we are aware of doing so, and that we are able to do so while suspending personal evaluation and discrimination are further permutations of an already complex matter. Primitive peoples do not examine their own or anyone else's social structure, and rock fans do not scrutinize their own role in popular culture. Only anthropologists speak of a people's mores, or ethos, or rituals, and only intellectuals analyze culture. The discussion of such matters at an advanced stage of intellectual and social development can even be considered a kind of luxurious artifact itself, like the gilded birds of Byzantium or the Fabergé eggs.

After the Second World War, the subject of popular culture attracted much attention. Of course, the phenomenon existed before that—it was not spontaneously generated by discussion! Certainly the early novels, the public pleasure gardens, the newspapers, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

music, theaters, and sporting life, all constituted a kind of popular culture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; and in the decline of an ancient folk culture, newer forms of public amusement were seen and known. In the New World, there had been from the beginning a kind of synthetic folk culture, involving itinerant players, preachers, circuses, peddlers, and camp meetings, untouched by the imported examples or copies of what was being done in the Old World. The demographic and social changes of the First World War revealed a more highly developed life of the people, and in fact revealed the people themselves. If they weren't going to be kept down on the farm after they'd seen Paree, then they were going to be visible in Chicago, Pittsburgh, or New York, just as the immigrants had begun to be visible all through the nineteenth century, responding in ever-increasing numbers to the promise of the American Dream. No ancient peasantry was here to be seen, no ancient rooted folk culture to be pursued unconsciously in the villages or revived by a William Morris or recorded by a Lady Gregory and her Yeats. No aristocracy, of course, but no historic working class either, although there certainly were workers. Masses? It was a possible description, but its meaning was inchoate.

Nevertheless, popular music, song sheets, and dances flourished; there were calendars, advertising cards, posters, theaters, music halls, burlesque houses, street parades, saloons, newspapers, political clubs, popular gathering places, streets and avenues for promenades; there were magazines, sewing circles, book circles, religious organizations, schools, settlement houses, shops, and neighborhoods; there were new inventions; there were artifacts and productions; there were concentrations of energy and skill; there was a life. It seems to have had a kind of innocence and good humor: the girl singing "I'm a Latin from Manhattan" knew it wasn't a Mozart aria, or Tosca's lament, or a Hugo Wolf song, but she was making a plucky effort—it was not mean-spirited. There seemed to have been a general yearning for pleasure and entertainment. Those who liked "Kennst du das Land" weren't offended by the Latin from Manhattan. T. S. Eliot, we know, was extremely fond of Marie Lloyd, Stuart Davis did a mural for Radio City Music Hall, and Martha Graham was a Broadway showgirl.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contemporary novels and pop art tell us how important that earlier popular culture was, how Jack Armstrong and Dick Tracy, Uncle Don and the Lone Ranger, Major Bowes and John R. Tunis all contributed to the personal and imaginative life, and how Deanna Durbin, Shirley Temple, Sonja Henie, Jane Withers, and the young Judy Garland as heroines were compatible with Joan of Arc, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Mary Queen of Scots, Marie Curie, and Saint Elizabeth of Hungary. What disrupted this cordial and continuous link? The invidious distinctions came later—the full emergence of popular culture and the quarrelsome delimitations of its power and breadth.

That troubled and troubling preoccupation with the entire culture, and the role of popular culture within or outside it, was contagious in the late forties and throughout the fifties. A census of the books, articles, panel discussions, symposiums, and other confrontations with the subject would probably amaze us. And it was then that the profusion and confusion of terms developed. "Kitsch" was a new term for a new phenomenon of public entertainment; it was not exactly mass culture, not high culture, not folk culture, but a distorted, debased battening on advanced culture. No longer the striving toward perfection or the expression of sweetness and light, culture now seemed clamorous for ranks and hierarchies, forgetting that it once sought "to do away with classes," as Arnold had said. Culture was now divided, and against itself; no one agreed on the best that had been known and thought. Whether what was called high culture had to be merged with avant-garde culture, and under what conditions the two could be distinguished, was not entirely clear. Later, it seemed, avant-garde culture *was* the only high culture. Some confusion arose out of the appropriation of a historic French cultural pastime involving an academy, a traditional culture, an avant-garde at first rejected, then accepted, then idolized, then rejected and discarded as the next team rushes in. Here of course we had no academy, in the classic European sense, and no real arbiters of standards; it was, in fact, an American problem that we didn't have them. The borrowed imagery did not really fit, but before its insufficiencies could be realized, and before an indigenous culture really

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

developed, new vocabularies were adopted, and new cultural forms and media demanded attention. The very size and power of the mass media, and their curiously high level of sophistication, prompted further examination of the culture. The term "mid-cult" was introduced to account for popular phenomena that were above mass culture in quality. Other terms were entered in the lists. A triad of "highbrow," "middlebrow," and "lowbrow" was offered and, later in the fifties, another import, the witty, snobbish "U" and "non-U" as distinctions of style in speech, behavior, taste, and manners. No Wycherley or Congreve recorded the energies trained on these elucidations of difference, but it was a private sport engaging numerous participants and a public display in books, newspapers, and magazines. The matter continued to be of interest until the appearance of the counter-culture, which displaced popular culture in public attention. During the eight or ten years of the counter-culture's attack and retreat, the earlier subject seemed quite exhausted, although occasionally someone poked it and it stirred.

Did all the distinctions matter, the frequently windy abstractions and definitions, the precisions and niceties of identification, the connoisseurship not of artifacts but of sensibilities? Why really should anyone care? It does matter of course, although there are more important things beyond it. After all, if resources are to be allocated, decisions made, research evaluated, programs funded, someone wants to know whether it should be done. Television programs are produced, newspapers and magazines are edited, landmarks are designated, museums are opened or closed, curriculums in humanistic studies are developed, people are hired or fired, promoted or retired, plazas are decorated with sculpture, architects are chosen for public buildings. Even in decisions seemingly far from the obvious commercialism of popular culture, ideas about the best hover in the background and implicitly guide the decisions.

No one is innocent anymore, however; there is no way of using the word "culture" in the old way, ingenuously, to mean the tending toward perfection. Not merely are sweetness and light debased beyond recovery, but we all know too much about the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

class basis of culture, the commercialism of popular culture, and the second meaning of "culture" taught us by the anthropologists. They didn't invent it, of course; it could even be seen in Arnold. Remember how much of his famous work is *not* about culture in the first sense, not about the rewards of Greek and Latin, the continuity of the English poetic tradition, or the transcendent power of English prose, but instead is about church discipline, social class, the Real Estate Intestacy Bill, family size, the disestablishment of the Irish church, and the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill? More recently, T. S. Eliot, too, seemed to be talking about one sort of culture but was really talking about the other, and even explicitly said that he included Derby Day, boiled cabbage cut in quarters, Elgar, and Victorian Gothic churches as well as the culture of the universities. Before long, the cold bathroom, the coal fire, and the cold bedroom with the hot-water bottle were found to be continuous with the great tradition, and the deceased wife's sister's taste for cabbage would count as much as her sensibility or soul. Then, if cabbage cut in quarters had something to do with George Eliot, obviously cabbage shredded into soup, with meat, had something to do with Tolstoy. As Baudelaire never tired of observing, "*chaque époque a son port, son regard, sa sourire*," and every class and country, too, all have their integrity, their validity, their unity.

In the midst of this continuing agitation about the culture of artifacts and the culture of custom in which it arises, the guardians of high culture have come to see themselves as monks of the Dark Ages, preserving treasures during a holocaust, against the day when their efforts will be rewarded, or at least recorded. And over all the landscape brood the new presences, the now excited, now somnolent mass media, more powerful than had been imagined at first, powerful as much in their possibilities as in any specific instances. Merely to know that twenty, forty, or sixty million people may be addressed, not to mention actually reached, suggests an ominous and immeasurable community beyond the traditional imagining by the culture of the ages. A term such as "popular culture" is a cheerful, optimistic way of thinking about the unknown multitudes, communities hardly conceivable to our

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ancestors. Yeats, pondering the land riots and the threats to ancient estates, wondered:

> How should the world be luckier if this house,
> Where passion and precision have been one
> Time out of mind, became too ruinous . . .

because the levellers would destroy something socially valuable and unique without being sure of gaining what went with it,

> . . . gradual Time's last gift, a written speech
> Wrought of high laughter, loveliness and ease . . . .

But that question belongs to the past now. The great impoverished masses addressed by the media today might have no use for such a gift, just as they had no use for the Real Estate Intestacy Bill, with no real estate to distribute after their deaths, or anything else. But were *their* cabbages, and *their* churches, and *their* row houses to be included in "all/That comes of the best knit to the best"? *All?*

Partisans of popular culture, among them Herbert J. Gans, the sociologist, seem to be suggesting just such generous hospitality as an alternative to the elitism and sanctioned inequality always associated with the idea of culture. For instance, in the controversies over preserving architectural landmarks, he has proposed that instead of saving the mansions of Victorian robber barons, or Greek Revival churches, public funds should be used to preserve ghettos, store-front churches, old-law tenements, and slum synagogues, to maintain exact, palpable records of how the masses lived. An early participant-observer, a student of films, TV, and mass housing, Mr. Gans lived in Levittown to study the life of its inhabitants at a time when most people of taste were rather indifferent to public need and contemptuous of whatever was mass produced or mass designed. In his recent book, *Popular Culture and High Culture,* Mr. Gans again places himself on the popular side. He is no Nat Hentoff evangelizing for jazz, however. What really absorbs him is neither popular culture nor high culture, but the polemics and politics of the continuing controversy about them. And no matter that the subtitle promises "an analysis and evaluation of taste," the book is really a kind of counterattack manual against a pur-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ported high-culture critique of popular culture, an argument against elitism rather than in favor of popular culture itself. He rebuts all the familiar criticism of popular culture—that it is crude, stereotyped, empty, full of violence, commercial, debased, inauthentic; and also the less familiar—that it is sexist, rigid, harmful, chauvinistic, addictive, trivial, repressive, that it defuses revolutionary action and encourages passivity. He mentions Lawrence Welk, Jacqueline Susann, *Argosy*, Elvis Presley, and adds a few other tags, but he is penurious with examples and has successfully hidden any preferences for particular performers, styles, instruments, or users of the popular culture he proposes to defend.

Actually, the defense is all counterattack because popular culture does suffer in open contest. Anyone who has *Measure for Measure* doesn't want Archie Bunker's moral universe, nor his liberal son-in-law's psychologizing either. But some people don't have *Measure for Measure*. What about them? Education is mentioned briefly in Mr. Gans's argument, but clearly it is what leads people to high culture, and it is not available in sufficient breadth of quality to train the taste of the entire populace. Until it is, he believes egalitarianism demands a pluralism of taste. We are urged to think of culture again in its divisions, of different kinds of taste and specific "cultures" that meet those tastes. Mr. Gans keeps "high" but breaks up "middle" into an upper and a lower form, and amplifies "lower" by adding "quasi-folk low." These are then anatomized, and thumbnail descriptions are provided, along with notations of other "publics" and their "cultures," such as the blacks, ethnics, children, youth, the elderly, et cetera. The taste structure and the taste hierarchy are not exactly congruent with the class structure and hierarchy, although there is quite a lot of overlap. All the "cultures" are deemed equally worthy and need be evaluated only on their adequacy in providing information and enjoyment for their "publics"—a neat way of disposing of an old problem—and until we arrive at an educational Utopia, when all have access to high culture education, cultural policy should have as its goal nothing more than providing "for every taste public the specific taste culture which expresses its aesthetic standards."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Arnold claimed that the great figures of culture were the true "apostles of equality," and he was surely right. Mr. Gans's cultural pluralism, or "aesthetic relationism," seems, on the contrary, to fix the existing structures and hierarchy, to champion and legitimize them, and in the end to patronize the very people it would save. His conception of culture as the provision of "objects" for "users" doesn't really help; it seems an awkward loan from another discourse. Novels, plays, films, music, pictures, television dramas or comedies, whether high or low, are not "used" as, say, buildings are, or practical objects; nor can they be produced as commodities to meet specific needs. The real question is whether any "taste public" can know what "objects" it requires in sufficient detail to commission them. Even useful objects are not engendered in that way, and cultural objects are even less accommodating. Especially when Mr. Gans's example of popular culture is the television program—he seems always to have this in mind—the satisfying of "taste publics" surely must be far less simple than discerning needs and methodically filling them. Also, the risk of displeasing such publics would make it an enterprise of uncertain value. According to Mr. Gans, ". . . whereas high culture expresses its disapproval of popular culture mainly in books and literary journals, popular culture publics also use the police, the pulpit, and the political arena to attack their enemies." This suggests that such publics are capricious in their demands, powerful, and no more likely to be pleased with other systems of cultural supply. This public for popular culture may be forty to eighty million people, possibly more, and the public for high culture is no more than half a million, if that. It seems unbecoming, then, for an intellectual to be requesting sympathy in this case—somewhat like pleading that one poor little tiger doesn't have a Christian.

If we are confronted by Frank Sinatra singing "My Way," and Hermann Prey singing "J'ai Perdu Mon Eurydice," and Mick Jagger singing "I Can't Get No Satisfaction," it's perfectly clear that neither Sinatra nor Jagger requires our concern, except in the case of their physical safety (for which they have their own well-paid bodyguards). Prey, and of course Gluck, also have a sizable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

public. But what if Phyllis Curtin were singing Ned Rorem's songs, or an artist and a performer even more avant-garde and less well known? If queried, the taste publics who are now so devoted to Sinatra and Jagger would probably want more of the same, and would retain such preferences until surfeit replaced them with others. In the allocation of resources, then, is there any reason to think that the admirers of Sinatra and Jagger would be moved to share resources with each other, not to mention with admirers of Prey, Curtin, and Rorem? Gluck is beyond their charity, but Sinatra and Jagger can, to use a popular phrase, cry all the way to the bank. Do Tony Orlando and Dawn require a Guggenheim? Should Norman Lear, creator of "All in the Family," be sponsored for Yaddo? Does Morris Lapidus, designer of the Americana and the Fontainebleau hotels, need a larger arena or forum; should he be named dean of a school of architecture? As a matter of fact, it would be more in keeping with an egalitarian spirit if Frank Sinatra were inspired to underwrite the Metropolitan Opera, or if Norman Lear established fellowships for the children of Polish immigrants or used money made from "The Jeffersons" to support struggling black colleges in the South, or if Morris Lapidus provided grants for architectural research.

A fan of "All in the Family" need not be entirely consistent in his tastes: he may stay in a Morris Lapidus–designed hotel while attending professional meetings, and he may pursue other tastes that link him to very different publics at very different levels. He may even be a sociologist:

> Sociology, for example, includes a high culture of grand theorists, with functionalist, Marxist, and other factions, as well as one that builds such theory out of mathematical models; a low culture to which sociological popularizers who write only for the lay audience are relegated; and several middle cultures made up of the textbook writers and the researchers who conduct the small-scale empirical studies that fill the professional journals. Even this description is overly simple, for it leaves out the research administrators who carry out large empirical studies and the majority of sociologists who do little or no research at all.

The phrasing and vocabulary—"relegated," "popularizers," "small-scale," "fill the professional journals"—carry an un-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mistakable impression that Mr. Gans would not be nearly so much of a pluralist in sociology as he is willing to be elsewhere. It would be surprising if he recommended the "textbook writers" for Social Science Research Council fellowships, or the "popularizers" for National Science Foundation grants, or urged their promotion to tenured positions in his own department at Columbia. And in the curriculum committee for the sociology major, he would probably not compose courses of study from the "small-scale empirical studies" or even the "large empirical studies" without ensuring that the future sociologists under his aegis had first absorbed "the grand theorists." But would those students be able to read, say, Marx and Comte? Even in translation? Or Mill, Bentham, Hobbes? Would they have had ancient history, grammar, weekly essays—all those staples of high-culture education? Marx was highly literate; would his readers be? Or would they have watched television four to six hours a day, as so large a percentage of contemporary children do, and would the popular culture prepare them for nothing but textbooks and popularizers? Finally, in any decision requiring public funds or other material implementation—a public broadcasting station's program in sociology or an adult studies program at a neighborhood center—is there any doubt that Mr. Gans would give his vote to the best that has been known and thought? As a popular phrase of great antiquity has always warned us, it all depends upon whose ox is being gored.

But what is this popular culture we talk about? Is it confined to a series of discrete artifacts corresponding to the artifacts of high culture but appealing to a different public? And do we accept it in that light? If so, it contradicts the egalitarian impulse that has led Mr. Gans and others to approach popular culture in a spirit of generosity and welcome. The spirit is certainly admirable and worthy; too long has the discussion of popular culture been marked by meanness, snobbery, and an unduly fastidious obsession with niceties of taste, staging confrontations of sensibility as if they were moral crusades, pitting Liberace against Mozart, Peggy Lee against Adelina Patti, The Who against the Juilliard Quartet, "Crocodile Rock" against "Casta Diva." Still, charity does not re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quire foolishness: the superstars of popular culture are out of their class in these posed contests, these polarizations. Perhaps the popular culture needs to be conceived of quite differently, as rather the entire texture of life that supports these artifacts and superstars, not merely the isolated instances themselves.

The household garden, for example, simply cannot be compared with the great gardens of Virginia, or of Wiltshire, Cornwall, and Devon. The American household gardener plants vegetables to last through the entire season, with enough to be eaten, frozen, and given away, and some flowers for the house as well as flowers to look at on a summer evening. So comparing it with a book of magnificent photographs or thinking of the great English gardeners is simply irrelevant. The household garden has no intricate design, no marvelous succession of blooms and colors, no topiary, no charming walks or garden sculpture, no elegance or grandeur. Of course, one can do the usual class analysis of the great gardens and their owners, and the elitism, and the social obsolescence—all unquestionably true but equally beside the point. The household garden is to be valued in a very different way, not as an isolated artifact, an aesthetic object—which is not to say either better or worse—but with its own kind of excellence.

Wit and precision, intelligence and skill, imagination and the marshaling of complexities are really to be found everywhere in the popular culture and in the pursuit of daily life. Rather than match the popular culture *against* high culture, any critic of generous spirit should be intent on linking them, revealing their continuity. Lacking as we do a genuine folk culture or ancestral life, abstractly placed on this land as all of us have been ever since the beginning of the nation, we are surrounded, not by inalienable land, language, and custom, but by what we have made out of the lack of them, and it is the popular culture all around us, in us and of us.

From the unpleasant or monitory tone in which it is discussed, no one would guess that there is anything to like about the popular culture. Elaborate attempts to treat some of it as high art—for example, the solemn analyses of detective stories as versions of the Grail legend or of soap operas as symbolic narrative—are rather unconvincing and dull. Anyone who has heard Bob and Ray on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WOR in the afternoons—or any of the comparable inventive local talk shows flourishing all over the country—can see that they display a wit and perceptiveness and moral intelligence that would have amused Jane Austen. Whether their scripts should all be preserved and afforded the same scrutiny as Jane Austen's books is another matter. Still, the disdain often expressed toward these popular examples shows a disturbing echo of the indifference that greeted novels in their early days; as Jane Austen herself noted, " 'I am no novel-reader—I seldom look into novels—Do not imagine that *I* often read novels—It is really very well for a novel.' Such is the common cant." The parallel should not be pushed too far. Television comedies certainly cannot be called "performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them," and certainly the advanced or high art of the day is not such as "would disgust a young person of taste." But there is too often an inability among the guardians of high culture to respond to new forms and media. Perhaps the very protective adherence to certain principles of culture restricts the sensitivity to new forms, but there is no moral benefit accruing in that. In our own day, it seems quite clear that some new forms are likely to appear out of the complex merger of different media, especially, for example, in the development of film and videotape. Subjects, techniques, a vocabulary, an intensity of commitment—all are becoming attached to this new way of recording, expressing, and organizing experience. Those of us who are familiar with other visual vocabularies, particularly those who have been close to the advanced art of the modern period, may be indifferent to this new work, finding it abusive as film and unsatisfactory as art. Quite possibly something genuine and interesting and valuable may emerge, both popular and advanced at the same time. The conventions of the popular culture all around us may provide a kind of preparation for the new forms, in much the same way that the late eighteenth-century evangelical tracts and the early nineteenth-century novel of manners were a preparation for the great age of the Victorian novel. We are not able to foretell such things—neither could readers of *The Dairyman's Daughter* know that *Middlemarch* was to come.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dust

Susan Snively

When they opened me there was a smell of flowers—
delphinia, olive leaves, berries of nightshade
which crumbled like skin, giving off fragrance
as the centuries leaped into the air.
My flesh had joined my bones, rotted
by tried unguents, stuffed with linen.
I have become my own buried kingdom.

The boat never comes, the bird flies away
into the sun, and the sun disappears
under a lid of gold and glass. Long since
I have put aside my gifts: the slings and bows,
the diadem, the chariot of wine. In eternity
you hear the sound of water like an endless song
sung by your mother before you were conceived.

If you become a temple, you will be an eternal mystery,
dark eyes under a cloak of stone, moving
through history like a heavy ghost. What was
my life? On a painted chest
my queen is stroking my shoulder
with balm. In an alabaster jar
lies the burnt remnant of my heart.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They went back through the long tunnels, leaving prayers
to seal my dead city. Under the wind and sun
the sand heaves silently. O God, I am but a little space,
a nest of dead wings. . . .
You who open my soul, remember me in my youth, even
as I was on the day I was born
hastening toward death on golden feet.

✪SUSAN SNIVELY, who is in the department of English at Simon's Rock Early College in Great Barrington, is now completing her first book of poems, *Autumn Street,* and writing a doctoral thesis on Sylvia Plath's poetry.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Days with Diaghilev

NICOLAS NABOKOV

"LOOK, LOOK!" SAID MY MOTHER. "There he is." It was the summer of 1924. We were sitting in one of those middling Russian restaurants in émigré Paris, which sprouted all over the world in the twenties, epicurean blessings conferred by the October Revolution. Opposite us, in another corner of the restaurant, a waiter in Russian haberdashery was serving a plate of Russian hors d'oeuvres to a big man with a monocle and a flower in his buttonhole. A streak of white cut across his black hair from the right side of his forehead, reaching to the back of his large round head. He talked excitedly to the young man at his side.

I recognized him immediately. I, as everyone else, knew the features of one of Europe's most famous men; besides I knew him instantly as the brother of my Uncle Valya. Although the Colonel and Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev were only half-brothers, the size and shape of their heads, the design of their eyebrows, and the form of their lips were so much alike that one could not miss the resemblance.

My mother had been talking to me for some time about the usefulness of my meeting Diaghilev. Now she seemed elated at the sight of him sitting across the room. "Finish eating, and let's go to their table," she said. "I'll introduce you to him." But I prevailed upon her to wait until Diaghilev and his companion had finished their meal.

All through the rest of the lunch she kept looking at Diaghilev's table, trying to catch his eye, and when she finally succeeded, she beamed at him in such an ostentatious manner that he could not

"Days with Diaghilev" has been adapted from NICOLAS NABOKOV'S book, *Bagazh: Memoirs of a Russian Cosmopolitan,* which will be published this month by Atheneum. Mr. Nabokov is a composer and teacher of music. His book is a reminiscence of his many interests and friendships over the past sixty years.

Copyright © 1975 by Nicolas Nabokov.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but smile back in that politely irritated way one smiles at people whose faces one has forgotten and who appear to be potential bores. (Later, I learned how terrified Diaghilev was of solicitous ballet mothers who were constantly seeking favors for their daughters.)

When Diaghilev and his companion had finished eating and asked for their bill (which my mother duly observed), she pulled my sleeve and said, "Come, it's time now." While we struggled past the crowded tables, Diaghilev rose and started putting on an enormous fur-lined coat.

"*Sergei Pavlovitch, nye ooznayete?* (don't you recognize me?)" said my mother as we approached. He dropped his monocle and gazed at her with bewilderment. But before he could answer she introduced herself and, turning to me, added, "And this is my youngest son; the one who writes music."

"Oh, *chère amie,* so you are the mother of the second half of Valya's quartet," he said in a gay voice. "Yes, of course I remember, we met in St. Petersburg." His face broke into a charming, benevolent smile. He put his monocle back in his eye and, taking my mother's hand, bent over in a bow and greeted her ceremoniously.

"What are you doing here?" he said. "Have you any news from Valya and Dasha? I haven't heard anything since 1921. You know, of course, that Pavlik and Alyosha have either been executed or were killed in the last months of the civil war. Valentin, I believe, is still in prison."

But my mother had no news and, seeing that he was about to leave, abruptly changed the subject. "Sergei Pavlovitch," she said, pointing to me, "I would like you to listen to his music. I want your opinion about it."

His face changed again and took on a bored expression, and he mumbled hurriedly: "Yes, of course . . . sometime . . . gladly . . . but now I'm very busy . . . rehearsals . . . you know. Do give me a ring when you'll be back." And fixing me with an icy look, he added: "I'd love to listen to your music, *jeune homme.* I only regret it can't be now. *Au revoir, chère amie, je suis navré.*"

All this was said in such a cuttingly final way that even my per-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sistent mother did not dare pursue the matter or attempt to delay his exit.

I remember him as he stood flanked by his youthful companion, the fur-lined coat with its handsome beaver collar making his large body and tremendous head look even more majestic, more lordly, than it appeared in the pictures I had seen. I remember his tired, haughty look; his dark eyes and the even darker bags under them. I remember the sallow, rather wasted color of his heavyset but well-kept face with the neatly trimmed moustache, the protruding lower jaw and the upturned upper lip, revealing, when he smiled, a row of dubiously new teeth.

A faint scent of violets always emanated from him; he used to chew tiny violet-scented bonbons. But perhaps what I recall best from that first meeting was his voice, his unique manner of speaking. His voice was high-pitched and nasal, and he spoke in a capricious tone, dropping unaccented syllables of long Russian words as if he had swallowed them up.

When I finally succeeded in being presented to Diaghilev as a composer and not as Mama's son and an ephemeral relative (my stepfather's first cousin married Diaghilev's half-brother), I was received with reserve, politeness, and marked skepticism. This time the road that led me to Diaghilev was the usual one that composers have traveled for centuries. Mrs. B. learned about me from Mr. A. and passed me on to Mrs. C.; Mrs. C., an active and kind lady who for many years ran a music salon in Paris, invited me to a tea party where she introduced me to a Mr. D.; Mr. D., who was about 25 percent more influential than the original Mr. A., told Mr. E. that I needed help. Mr. E. was an elderly gentleman, a hunchback, and a tireless music lover. He had a niece, Mlle. F., a lady in her middle thirties of Arab descent, who was endowed with an extraordinary majestic bosom, a powerful voice, and a wooden leg. Mr. E. bullied his niece into learning three of my songs. Several months later, in the winter of 1925-6, she performed them at a hodgepodge concert of the Société Musicale Indépendante. This organization gave several concerts yearly, consisting of first performances by young composers.

The audience was bored and chatty, and abstractedly ap-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plauded the twenty-odd pieces of music that preceded my songs. When the time came for Mlle. F. and me to march onto the stage, we got stuck in the narrow passage leading to the stage and I unwittingly tripped up my wooden-legged diva. Fortunately she did not fall to the floor, but once on stage she turned to me and muttered under her breath that if it were not for the fact that we were on stage she would slap my face. Naturally enough, this upset me at the very outset of our performance.

At the end of the first song, which was long and tedious, written to poems of Omar Khayyám (translated into French from an English translation by Edward FitzGerald), I saw Prokofiev, whom I had met earlier, sitting in the middle of the first row, smiling and quietly but insistently rubbing his chin, which in France means *quelle barbe!* (what a bore!). I tried to look away, and in doing so caught a glimpse of another very familiar face; in the second row right behind Prokofiev I recognized the bemonocled, bulldog countenance of Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev, who, as I later found out, was dragged in by Prokofiev to hear my music. The discovery made me so jittery that I lost control of myself and bungled the accompaniment of the remaining two songs. Under those complex circumstances it was only natural that the concert was a failure. . . . Afterwards, Prokofiev came backstage to say that Diaghilev was waiting out front in a taxi and wanted to see me. When we came out I was surprised to find Diaghilev in a gay mood. He smiled at me as he said, "Your songs were not too bad, not as bad as you think, but tell me, where for heaven's sake did you find that female monster, and why don't you leave Omar Khayyám alone? But you must come and show me your music . . . I mean your other music."

With my other music in hand, I went to see Diaghilev at his residence in the Grand Hotel. We sat around an upright piano in what was probably one of the hotel's banquet rooms. Present besides Diaghilev and myself were Prokofiev; Valichka Nouvel, Diaghilev's friend and collaborator, a wiry little man wearing glasses; Boris Kochno, Diaghilev's secretary and official librettist; and Serge Lifar, Diaghilev's recently discovered dancer.

I finished playing one movement of a piano sonata, and fol-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lowed it up with excerpts from a cantata I had been working on for a year. While I was playing, Diaghilev leaned on the silver top of his cane, but as soon as I stopped he slumped back into his chair and sat there with a bored expression, saying absolutely nothing. He then raised his eyebrows and said, "*Et bien? . . . C'est tout?*" I said yes, it was all I had to show.

After a while he turned to Boris Kochno and asked, "Boris, when does the rehearsal start?"

"I think it is on already," Boris answered.

"Then let's go." He got up hurriedly. "Thank you, Nika, for playing your music . . . when you have written more, come and show it to me. *Au revoir.*"

I felt let down. "Don't pay any attention," said Nouvel, "that is his usual manner. On the contrary, if he had disliked your music, he would have been terribly polite and paid you all sorts of silly compliments. Am I not right, Sergei Sergeiyevitch?" he said, turning to Prokofiev.

"Well . . . I think Nabokov should have waited to show him his cantata until he had finished it," snapped Prokofiev. "This way it doesn't mean much."

Curiously enough, it was this very same cantata which became my first and only Diaghilev commission as the ballet-oratorio *Ode.*

On a damp and foggy April evening of 1928 I was traveling to Monte Carlo at Diaghilev's invitation and expense. I was going there to work on the production of *Ode.* Tomorrow, I said to myself, I shall be walking on the warm, crackling gravel of the *jetée du Casino,* the promontory behind the Casino, looking at the gentle carpet of the Mediterranean and the equally gentle silky sky. Tomorrow I will begin to play my part in the Ballet Russe, the most famous artistic enterprise in Europe. I felt exhilarated and proud. I thought of the talks and discussions I would have with Diaghilev and his associates, with the many composers, painters, poets, and choreographers who would be in Monte Carlo with Diaghilev, preparing the new productions for the coming Parisian season. I thought of working with Leonide Massine, the choreographer, and Pavel Tchelitchev, the painter, whom Dia-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ghilev had selected to do my ballet; I imagined the excitement of rehearsals, the pleasure of seeing my composition take shape and form.

Valichka Nouvel had come to the station to see me off. He gave me the name of the hotel I was to go to in Monte Carlo and handed me a check—the second installment of my ballet commission. "Don't you get in a row with him," he said with a smile, "and come back in despair. It has happened, you know." But I was sure that everything was going to work out well, and that by the time I returned to Paris the ballet would be in splendid shape for its Parisian premiere.

Approaching Monte Carlo from Nice, the train wormed its way past Cap Ferrat and around the Bay of Villefranche. Then, after one last smoke-filled tunnel, it slowed down, and suddenly, on the south side of the tracks, appeared the life-sized version of the famed colored scenic postcard—the Monaco peninsula topped by its medieval castle, with a cluster of quaint houses descending to the azure harbor.

I made my way to my hotel, and thence to the Salle Garnier. After a bit of questioning and searching about, I found a path through the labyrinth of gambling rooms, corridors, and rehearsal halls and stepped into the theater. Diaghilev was sitting on the left side near an upright piano, his back turned to the empty theater. On a chair next to him sat a funny-looking man with thick glasses. Behind him, leaning against the piano, stood the massive figure of André Derain, who, hearing me creep up, turned his head, smiled, and signaled me to come over. Diaghilev couldn't see me; his back was turned and he seemed absorbed by what was happening on stage. A group of three ballerinas were clustered around a male dancer. The ballerinas were Tchernicheva, Doubrovskaya, and Nikitina, three of the company's best prima ballerinas. The male dancer was Serge Lifar. Their pose has since become famous in the annals of classical choreography: Lifar knelt between the three ballerinas, who were positioned to form an arabesque figure; each had one leg up in the air; their bodies dipped forward and their necks stretched upward so that they looked like three drinking swans whose precarious balance was maintained by a trembling

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hand clutching Lifar's shoulder. In front of the group stood its inventor, the slight and incredibly young-looking choreographer George Balanchine, Diaghilev's recent discovery, his new choreographic genius. Suddenly Diaghilev turned around. As he saw me, an ironic smile spread over his face. "Ah, Nika," he said in a teasing voice, "why are you so late? Where have you been all these weeks? Everybody has been waiting for you to start working." Without waiting for an answer, he pointed at Balanchine, then said to Derain, "What he is doing is magnificent. It is pure classicism such as we have not seen since Petipa." Then he turned his back on us again to watch the dancers onstage.

I was startled, and felt abused by Diaghilev's rude reception. It was unfair and unjust; no one had told me that everybody was waiting for me to start working in Monte Carlo. On the contrary. I had been waiting for more than two weeks to hear from Diaghilev. But no word had come. Finally it had been Valichka Nouvel who decided to send me off. As I stood there getting madder every second, Derain bent over and murmured, "Don't worry about it, he is in a bad humor."

The rehearsal soon came to an end. Diaghilev got up and told me to come along with him to the hotel. As we came out into the sunshine and started walking toward the Hôtel de Paris, Diaghilev began by telling me that *Ode,* my ballet, was getting to be a problem, that no one really cared about it, and that everything had been mishandled from the start. "Boris doesn't know what he wants to do with it and Massine knows even less. As for Tchelitchev, I can't make head or tail of his experiments, but I do know one thing: they have nothing to do with the original conception of *Ode.*" He reproached me for showing no interest in my own work. "You should be here all the time and you shouldn't think that once the music is written your task is over." He said that the only reason he had decided to do *Ode* against his better judgment was that Lifar liked the music and wanted to have a second ballet for the coming season, "to satisfy his enormous vanity. . . . You know Seryoja hasn't a brain in his head, and the fact that he likes your music is therefore nothing to boast about."

Diaghilev grew more and more irritated, and his language

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

became more and more abusive. Finally, as we reached the doors of the Hôtel de Paris, he said, in his most exasperated tone, "If all of you continue to be indolent nothing will come of your *Ode.* I can't do anything for you. I simply won't. I will wash my hands of the whole business. You had better go and find Boris and Seryoja and start working at once." Then, abruptly, he turned his back on me and went to the door. But before he started through the revolving door, he shouted out, "If all of you finally decide to start working, don't pull the cart in three different directions. It will get stuck and I'm not going to help you pull it out of your mud!" And with a curt "*Au revoir,* I'll see you tomorrow," he disappeared.

As a result of this monologue (it was my first experience of Diaghilev in a tantrum), my first evening in Monte Carlo, in the bosom of the "greatest artistic enterprise in Europe," was a melancholic flop. Alexandrina, Boris, and I dined at a tiny restaurant and they tried to cheer me up. They said that it was just another one of those flurries of ill-temper that had become routine that spring. Boris assured me that everything was working out well, that Tchelitchev had invented marvelous sets for *Ode;* Massine liked them and was anxiously waiting for me to start working. "Of course," he said, "all will be ready by the time we leave Monte Carlo. Diaghilev is angry because he doesn't seem to grasp our ideas about the ballet. He isn't sore at you or at me but really at himself."

My life during the next four weeks in Monte Carlo was completely regulated. I worked with Massine from ten to one, and sometimes again from three to six. Over and over again I thumped out parts of my ballet on the horrible little upright pianos that were in all the rehearsal halls of the Monte Carlo theater. Massine was composing the choreography while I played, and in the intervals between parts and sections he would ask me to explain the construction of the music. "Where does this melody end? What instruments hold this chord? Is it correct for me to assume that this is one long phrase?" Then he would take profuse notes in an imposing leather-bound scrapbook.

Contrary to what I expected, Massine, who in those years was usually stern and taciturn, was voluble with me, and at moments

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even gay and smiling. On the whole our work progressed without a hitch; however, an inherent difficulty bedeviled our collaboration, and it derived from the fact that I had no experience whatever in working with a choreographer. To judge choreography in the rough, under the drab conditions of a rehearsal hall, requires experience and imagination. I felt unable to make any valid judgment about what Massine was doing, for what I saw were disconnected bits of a whole that my imagination could not put together. Besides this, there was something disconcerting about having to repeat the same measures at the piano hundreds of times and see the same steps accompany them. Often I felt so completely dulled at the end of a rehearsal that I did not know whether I liked what I saw or not. I had no way of knowing whether it was good or bad. I did what many young composers do with their first stage works—I acquiesced in almost everything Massine did with my music. After all, he was a famous choreographer who had been in the business for more than a decade, while I was a complete newcomer. When he would ask me, "Do you like this?" or "Do you think this fits your music?" I would usually agree.

Not until the broad outlines of the choreographic whole began to take shape—which happened about the third week of my stay in Monte Carlo—did it dawn on me that, with the exception of two or three lovely lyrical dances, Massine's choreography, though probably very good in itself, had very little to do with my music and with the whole eminently romantic mood of *Ode*. It was Diaghilev who made me aware of this. He came one day to a morning rehearsal to watch Massine compose a dance for Serge Lifar. He sat through half of it, his eyes closed, his head drooping. Then, without a word, he got up and left. Astonished, Massine and I looked at each other. Massine laughed. "I don't see the point of his coming to rehearsals when he does nothing but sleep through them," he said.

But Diaghilev had not slept. Quite the contrary. He was very much awake and very much upset. At eleven o'clock that night I was hauled out of bed by a messenger who told me that Diaghilev was waiting for me in the rehearsal room, that he wanted to see Lifar's dance again, and that several messengers had been dis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

patched all over Monte Carlo to search for Lifar and Boris Kochno, who were at a party somewhere.

When I arrived at the theater, Diaghilev was all alone in the tiny office next to the rehearsal room. Although angry, he was calm with me and looked genuinely concerned. He said that what he had seen that morning was "utter rubbish," that Massine did not understand anything at all—"not the first thing"—about *Ode.* He said that he wanted to see it now, again, without Massine's presence (Diaghilev and Massine had been at odds for years), but that Lifar and Kochno could not be found. He then gave me a long instructive talk about how he imagined the choreography of my ballet. He saw it as romantic, lyrical, with rich, suave, and soft movements, "rather of a Fokinesque" character. "At moments it should be pure pageantry—festive, glittering, and brilliant. At other moments it should be tender, mysterious, and gentle. What Massine is doing is modern, cold, angular stuff that has nothing to do with your music."

We waited for more than an hour, but neither Lifar nor Kochno appeared. Finally Diaghilev, in a sad, tired way, said, "Nika, you had better go back to bed. I'm sorry about your ballet, but what can I do? Nobody seems willing to cooperate."

After that night of crisis, Diaghilev did not return to the subject of *Ode,* nor did he ever seem interested in Massine's choreography. He stopped coming to rehearsals to see what Massine was doing, and when I mentioned my ballet in his presence he kept silent or changed the subject. Only once did he acknowledge the fact that *Ode* still existed, when he asked me to bring over the score and the orchestral parts, and told me that the orchestra had twenty minutes of free time and could read it through. I tried to dissuade him by saying that *Ode* was forty minutes long and that, besides, the parts were still full of mistakes. He replied that Scotto, the conductor, would read it through in a fast tempo; and as for the mistakes, they were not his concern but my funeral.

That orchestral reading was one of the worst musical tortures of my life. Scotto had never seen the score before and was counting the beat in double time as best he could. The parts, because of my inexperience and the copyist's carelessness, were a sea of mistakes.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Diaghilev and I sat in the front row of the dark hall. Each time I wanted to jump up from my seat, the heavy hand of Diaghilev held me back. "Don't disturb them." he said. "They haven't much time."

The piece we heard was a mass of inchoate rumblings and noises reminiscent of nothing so much as the tuning-up of a school orchestra. At the end I felt limp and beaten. Diaghilev turned to me. "You like that?" he said, and without waiting for an answer got up and left the theater.

I began to realize that Diaghilev's earlier prediction was coming true: the "cart" named *Ode,* or what was left of the cart, was definitely being pulled in several directions. I did not know what Tchelitchev was doing (he was guarding his work from any intrusions on my part), nor did I quite like or understand what Massine had done with the choreography.

Only once was I permitted to attend the ritual of Tchelitchev's experiments; he needed me to time some film shots he had made for *Ode.* I saw some extraordinary pictures of young men wearing fencing masks and tights diving in slow motion through what seemed to me to be water. I could not understand what this had to do with my ballet, but I was told by Kochno (Tchelitchev wouldn't speak to me), who had, in default of Diaghilev, somehow assumed the responsibilities for the production of *Ode,* that this indeed represented "the element of water." Much as I respected the "element," I still could not understand what connection it had with my music and the whole conception of the ballet.

All in all, when I left Monte Carlo the prospects of a successful production of *Ode* seemed hopelessly remote. Massine's choreography was only half-finished, Tchelitchev's decor was a total mystery to me, although I knew that it was largely still in an experimental state and that Diaghilev had had several tantrums about it. Worst of all, so far as I was concerned, was my own orchestration (my first attempt at writing for a large orchestra), which in part did not "sound" at all, and which needed intense overhauling. I departed Monte Carlo filled with apprehension and dark forebodings.

I arrived in Paris only a few weeks before the ballet season was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to open. The press had already begun to print anticipatory articles about Diaghilev's new productions. I was pestered by so many social calls, interviews, and dinner engagements that my friends Sauguet and Desormière decided to hide me in the apartment of a musical friend, where I could quietly reorchestrate certain sections of *Ode* and correct its shamelessly incorrect orchestral parts.

Finally, ten days before the start of the season, Diaghilev and the ballet troupe arrived in Paris, and rehearsals began again. Massine and I renewed our long morning sessions, and in a few days he completed the choreography. But the Tchelitchev side of the project, so far as I knew, remained on the same equivocal plane as ever. This time I was shown some of the drawings for the sets and costumes. Kochno even showed me a complete miniature model of the stage, with the opening scene of the ballet. Here, for the first time, I began to realize what Tchelitchev wanted to achieve.

The model was all in blue tulle, which when lit with a tiny flashlight became strangely alive and acquired an extraordinarily mysterious and ephemeral beauty. I came to understand that Tchelitchev's whole project depended on many intangibles. It required mechanical perfection and virtuosity in the use of lighting equipment (then still in its infancy), perfect coordination between light and movement, between the camera (for many of the "light sets" were achieved by means of motion picture projections) and the music, between the choreography and the changes of scenic effects.

Added to all this, up to the last two or three days before the first performance of *Ode*, Diaghilev remained completely indifferent. It seemed as though he had abandoned all of us to disaster. Then, on the morning of June 2, 1928, the telephone rang very early, despite the warning I had left the night before at the hotel desk not to disturb me until ten. I had returned late that night after a full day of rehearsals, an orchestral reading of *Ode,* and a grueling choral rehearsal. Diaghilev had come to the theater with Prokofiev but had left brusquely before the rehearsals ended. At first I thought of just letting the telephone ring, but the thing persisted. I picked up the receiver and was about to bark a curse into

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it when, to my surprise, I heard Diaghilev shouting at me.

"Why don't you answer your phone? Why are you sleeping when you should be in the theater? Get up right away and come to the theater. This mess can't go on any longer. I have ordered a full stage rehearsal at ten, a full orchestra rehearsal at two, a full chorus rehearsal at five, and all evening we will rehearse the lights." He abruptly hung up.

From that moment on, and through the next three days, until the last curtain had fallen on a highly successful performance of *Ode,* I lived in a state of full frenzy. Like everyone else connected with the production, I worked day and night, in an agony of sleeplessness and exhilaration, the like of which I have never experienced before or since.

Diaghilev had taken over in the fullest sense. He gave the orders, he made the decisions, he assumed the responsibilities. He was everywhere, his energy was limitless. He ran to the prefect of police to have him overrule the fire department's decision forbidding the use of neon lights on stage, which Tchelitchev wanted to use in the last scene of the ballet. (Neon lights were a novelty at the time and considered unsafe.) He supervised the dyeing, cutting, and sewing of costumes. He was present at every orchestra and choral rehearsal and made the conductor Desormière, the soloists, and the chorus repeat sections of the music over and over again until they blended perfectly with the choreographic motions and the light-play of Tchelitchev's scenery. He encouraged the leisurely and sluggish stagehands of the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt with bribes and flattery. He helped us all paint the props and the scenery. But above all he spent two full nights directing the complicated lighting rehearsals, shouting at Tchelitchev and at his technical aids when the delicate lighting machinery went wrong; and at me when my piano playing slackened and became uneven; and at Lifar when his steps fell out of touch with the rhythm of the music and the changes of lighting.

On June 6, the day of the opening, I was exhausted—stunned and shaking with the kind of precarious excitement that comes after long exertion and sleeplessness. But when, fifteen minutes before the curtain went up, I saw Diaghilev come in through the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

backstage door, in full evening dress—bemonocled, his famous rose pearl shining on a snow-white shirt—I knew that it had been only thanks to his incredible drive and energy that *Ode* had been pieced together and that the curtain would rise at all.

Up until the last minute I had been painting scenery, and I had seen Diaghilev leave the theater an hour before the performance was to begin. He had looked worn, gray, and sallow as he crossed the stage; his face was covered with a two-day growth of beard. Now he was his usual self again: calm, confident, resplendent. He stopped before me and told me to go out front into the theater. I mumbled something to the effect that I hoped all would go well and that the performance would be a success.

"Well . . ." answered Diaghilev nonchalantly, his face changing to a charming affectionate smile, "It's up to you," and he opened his arms and moved them backwards in the suave and deliberate gesture of a virtuoso conductor, in apparent modesty, raising the orchestra musicians to their feet to acknowledge the public's applause.

I saw Diaghilev for the last time in July 1929, a little more than a year after *Ode's* first performance. We met briefly at the Baden-Baden music festival. He was in the company of his old friend the Princesse de Polignac (Paris's greatest music patron of the time), and his new youthful composer-find, the birdlike and brittle Igor Markevitch. Diaghilev did not look well; his face was puffy with the glazed, yellow quality that diabetics take on during or after an attack. He had come to Baden-Baden to hear a new work by Hindemith, "his" new composer-collaborator. After the performance of this work, I walked him back to his hotel. Despite his appearance, his mood seemed happy. He talked gaily about his plans for the rest of the summer and for his autumn season. "I am going to take Markevitch to visit Richard Strauss and to a few Wagner performances at the Munich Opera," he said. "Then I'm going to the Lido, as usual. Why don't you come with us?" Much as I would like to have gone, I was bound for Berlin on the morning train.

I asked Diaghilev how Hindemith's ballet was progressing. He

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

answered that he had spent a day with Hindemith in Berlin, and that very little of the ballet music was actually on paper. "But I'm not worrying," he said. "I know what an extraordinary craftsman he is and how fast he works."

He asked me what I was writing and when I told him that I was in the middle of my first symphony he grew interested and wanted to know all about it—what it was like, was it going to be as lyrical and romantic as *Ode,* how many movements were planned, and how soon it was going to be ready. "Splendid!" he exclaimed. "As soon as I'm back in Paris you will play it for me, won't you? I also want you to look carefully at the music of young Markevitch. It's very exceptional stuff—still very green, but enormously gifted."

Three weeks later I was returning from Berlin to my summer home in Alsace. As usual I took the night train, which left Berlin at six or seven in the evening. Around ten o'clock the train stopped at Halle. I went out and bought the Halle evening paper. I couldn't read in the compartment because the lights were down, so I went to the men's room. There, in the dim light of a 25-watt bulb, I glanced at the front page. In the right hand corner at the top, I saw a two-line message from Venice. It was dated August 19 and read:

"This morning at 5 AM the famous Russian dancer Diaghilev died here."

The shock, the loss, the feeling of emptiness were overwhelming. Why did he have to die? What will happen now to his work? And what will happen to all of us, his friends, his artistic collaborators, his troup of dancers? I went to the post office and sent incoherent telegrams to Kochno, to Missia Sert, to George Balanchine, to Prokofiev.

Gradually the circumstances of Diaghilev's death became known to me. He died of an attack of diabetes, his old illness which he always neglected. He suffered a great deal, physically and morally. All his life he had been afraid of sickness, of loss of power and of consciousness. When the attack began he must have known that his days, his hours, were numbered. Two close friends were near him, Lifar and Kochno. Later, during the last few days of his life, three other faithful friends arrived, Missia Sert, Coco Chanel,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the Baroness d'Erlanger. He died at dawn on August 19, at the age of fifty-seven, after a long, tormented agony. He died as he had lived all his life, in a modest hotel room, a homeless adventurer, an exile, and a prince of the arts.

And just as his life had been a strange and exotic pageant, so was his death. On the morning of August 21 a procession of four gondolas took his body to the Russian cemetery on the tiny San Marco Island. The coffin was covered with tuberoses, tea roses, and carnations. A Russian priest and the small choir of San Georgio dei Greci sang the doleful chants of the Slavic funeral service while the procession moved to the cemetery through the still waters of the Venetian lagoon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Leo Strauss

Becoming Naïve Again

WERNER J. DANNHAUSER

Since his death on October 18, 1973, at the age of seventy-four, Leo Strauss has become an ever more well-known figure. His fame is spreading slowly, but it is spreading. For a long time before 1973 he was not, to be sure, unknown, but his work tended to be neglected, misunderstood, ridiculed. In other words, he was controversial—and he still is. Now, however, his critics can no longer take refuge in scoffing and contempt; they are faced with the more rigorous task of refuting him before the bar of reason.

No doubt controversy will continue to rage around this thinker who produced interpretations of political philosophers from Plato to Nietzsche that were a mysterious combination of the strange and the simple. Yet one thing about him is conceded by both his friends and his enemies: he was an altogether extraordinary teacher. That assertion needs no more proof than that he founded a school of sorts, that he had a number of students so devoted to him that they became known as his disciples, and that today there are a number of teachers referred to as "Straussians."

Now, what is a Straussian? Since Leo Strauss reached the height of his power as a teacher at the University of Chicago, where he was a member of the department of political science during the fifties and sixties, his students most typically teach political science, though one can also find them in classics and philosophy departments. They hold positions at a goodly number of universities, and a goodly number of other universities expend considerable amounts of energy keeping them out.

The label Straussian is one affixed to certain people by those who are not Straussians. The motives for labeling anyone a Straussian can range from a neutral wish to describe, or benevolent skepticism, all the way to outright hostility. The reactions of those who are so described also show great variations. Some do not deny their affiliation but are hesitant or reticent; some claim that a case of mistaken identity has been perpetrated. And some—I am among them—wear the label with pride, knowing that to follow Leo Strauss is to be committed to genuine open-mindedness in regard to the perennial questions of political philosophy.

Not everyone, it is true, looks at it that way. From an outsider's perspective, a Straussian is likely to appear dogmatic, disputatious, and given to defending himself even when he is not attacked. His influence on academia has been described as "the dead hand of scholasticism," though it is not certain whether the man who used that phrase knew what scholasticism was. Presumably he meant that when others cite Lukács and Arendt, Straussians quote Plato and Aristotle; when others mention Tillich and Buber, we are more likely to refer to Averroës and Maimonides.

A Straussian, from this perspective, is someone who reads secular books religiously,

WERNER J. DANNHAUSER is associate professor of government at Cornell University, where he teaches political philosophy. He is the author of *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, and is a contributor to *Commentary*, *Judaism*, the *National Review*, the *American Political Science Review*, and *Denver Quarterly*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Talmudically, cabalistically, but above all perversely. So intent is he on finding the message "between the lines"—Strauss articulated esoteric communication in *Persecution and the Art of Writing*—that he neglects to state what is on the lines; the resulting interpretations can be a haze of mumbo jumbo pierced by an occasional insight. Moreover, while he reads secular books religiously, a Straussian reads religious books impiously, or at least in so obscurantist a fashion that one is hard put to say whether he is an atheist or a secret agent of the Vatican. To top off all these slightly unsavory characteristics, a Straussian may well be politically to the right of center. As the spectrum is defined at the universities these days, that may mean no more than that he supported Humphrey in 1968 and worked for Jackson in 1972. No matter—right of center is a bad place to be for professors.

Yet notwithstanding all their infirmities and iniquities, Straussians have, to put it quite simply, become a force with which even the most sensible and progressive university administrators must reckon. The reason is obvious: on the average, Straussians are teachers whose quality is far above average. And that is very important, for as the universities try to weather their financial crises a Straussian who can attract students in droves is worth his weight in gold. What is more, the era of student power is by no means over; for example, while the grades teachers are giving students are becoming less important, the grades students are giving teachers on what are euphemistically called evaluation forms are becoming more significant. Straussian teachers regularly earn very high marks, a fact that is all the more curious when one considers they are prone to be strict with students and to abstain from kissing their feet—not to speak of other parts of the human anatomy.

The explanation the whole phenomenon calls for is not all that hard to find. Straussians attract students because they are able to address the souls of students, and they are able to address the souls of students because they were schooled by an altogether incomparable teacher: Leo Strauss.

So we are back at the beginning—Leo Strauss as teacher. Since teaching is a profoundly personal activity, I know no other way to try to describe Leo Strauss as teacher than by recourse to personal reminiscences, it being clearly understood that I was never his closest or best student. And since there is something ineffable about teaching and its effects, I must recollect in a manner completely nonscientific.

Once upon a time—the fall of 1956, to be exact—I wandered into one of Strauss's seminars at the University of Chicago. I had just arrived there as a graduate student and I was awestruck. For many of us who went to high school in the forties, the University of Chicago had an aura about it that not even Harvard could match; it was *the* place to go. (To this very day I cannot visit there without realizing that for me it will always be *the* university.)

I was a student of the social sciences and, like most of the students of Leo Strauss, at the time I began my studies I was a relativist ill at ease in his relativism. I took for granted the validity of the fact-value distinction, although I was pained by its implications. I somehow knew that Hitler was not merely one man's meat and another man's poison, but I really thought one would have to say I "knew" that. I believed that scientifically (which also meant rationally) one could not get behind or beyond the multitude of values people espoused. I had read *Natural Right and History* by Leo Strauss, a book attacking that very position. It left me confused, excited, mildly stunned, and determined to look for Leo Strauss as soon as I could manage to attend the University of Chicago.

He was not hard to find in 1956, being probably one of the three most well known—and certainly most notorious—professors in the Division of Social Sciences. That quarter he was giving a lecture course and a seminar, but I was told, correctly, that one could get the true flavor of the man only in his seminars. These were always held in the same room in the social science building (I believe it was 302) and always twice a week at the same hour. The catalog scheduled them from 3:30 to 5:00 P.M., but while they started punctually they usually lasted until 6:00 or even 7:00 P.M.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I had been admonished to come early, and that was good advice for a room holding thirty comfortably and holding fifty or sixty uncomfortably for a Strauss seminar. The class was about equally divided between newcomers like me and old-timers for whom it was a fall reunion. I was nervous but I did not have long to agitate, for Leo Strauss walked in punctually. In the middle of the 1950s he was a man in the middle of his own fifties, but my first impression was not that he was middle-aged, or old, or young, but small. (He had been described as an intellectual giant, and I suppose I am too literal-minded.) My second impression, when he began to speak, was that he had a high, soft voice bordering on squeakiness. I had been told to sit near the front of the room; that too was good advice, for one had trouble hearing him.

In the physical sense, he was a bit unprepossessing. Over the years I have often marveled at how little he had going for him, in the ordinary sense, as a teacher. For example, now that I am myself a teacher I frequently catch myself using histrionics, or trying deliberately to be charming, or striving after magnetism. Strauss, by contrast, operated with a quiet and undramatic kind of good cheer, a shining and pristine simplicity.

That simplicity is one of the first and most lasting impressions I have of the man. We were to read Hobbes in the first seminar I attended. Strauss began without further ado to say that we would read only the first two parts of the *Leviathan,* that this was "disgraceful" but that we would have our hands full doing justice to even that much. Then he spoke with a kind of childish seriousness about requirements: those wanting credits must prepare a twenty-minute presentation on a few chapters; long experience had taught him that seven double-spaced typewritten pages could be read aloud in twenty minutes.

After that, he turned unceremoniously to some introductory remarks. The first question he considered surprised me: Why should one read Hobbes today? It was a question I had been asking myself, for I had read Hobbes previously in a survey course, and the only parts I did not find boring were those I found incomprehensible. I had come to study with Strauss; I had not come to study Hobbes, but Strauss firmly directed our minds to Hobbes (only much later were we to realize that the director was himself a great mind). He showed us that Hobbes was —relevant. One uses that term with some embarrassment today, but no other word will do. He exposed our opinions as *mere* opinions; he caused us to realize that we were the prisoners of our opinions by showing us the larger horizons behind and beyond them. Thus we all believed in watered-down teachings derived from Marx, Freud, and others; but buttressing our views was modern thought as such, and one of its towering giants was Hobbes. To understand the true nature of our beliefs, it was necessary to undertake an arduous journey back in time, a journey that would not even end with Hobbes, for modern thought at its best was a rebellion by giants like Hobbes against men perhaps even more gigantic—Plato and Aristotle. But the conversion, the turning to light he tried to effect in us, did not necessarily terminate in Platonism. Not the least remarkable of a number of remarkable suggestions—or commands—which Leo Strauss produced that day was that we simply must begin with the assumption that Hobbes's teaching was true—not relatively true, not true for Hobbes, not true for its time, but *simply true.* That was why we had to read him with all the care we could muster, and that was why (I was to hear him say this again and again) one ought not even to begin to criticize an author before one had done all one could do to understand him correctly, to understand him as he understood himself. What is more, we were there not only to learn *about* Hobbes, but to learn *from* him.

I write about Strauss badly because I write about him and his methods too abstractly, because I make it all sound very somber. I wish I were a poet, so I could do him justice. I wish I could recapture now, even as I wish I could relive, the atmosphere prevailing in the many seminars of his that I attended. They were not somber at all: what remains most shining and vivid in my memory is the great amount of laughter that punctuated those classes. They constitute some of the best and happiest memories of my life.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Leo Strauss talked a great deal during his seminars. He knew more about Socrates than any man I have ever known, and yet—and therefore—he did not act as Socrates is supposed to have acted. He did not answer questions with questions, nor did he play the midwife in the conventional sense. Nevertheless, he encouraged questions, and I suspect he would have agreed with Heidegger that questioning is the piety of thinking. His response to questions was amazingly thorough, patient, and good humored. I remember the first time I asked him something about Hobbes. I thought I was being stupid and I was afraid of exposing my stupidity, but he set up situations where one learned not to be afraid to admit that, or what, one did not understand. So I asked, and he astonished me by raising my questions to a stratospheric level. I had not known what I was asking, but I was wrestling with a genuine perplexity. I remember his leaving his desk, as he did at times, and coming over to my chair, talking to me personally about some knotty problem in Hobbes. I soon grew dizzy, for he was giving me more food for thought than I could digest; but before he was through I had learned something about what it meant to think.

He enjoyed himself hugely during those question periods, and the obvious fun he was having was contagious. His good humor was almost unfailing. Only once in the years I studied with him did I see him abandon that sunniness, and it was during that very seminar on Hobbes, when the questioner accused him of not taking Hobbes seriously enough. He icily informed the student that he had spent more time studying Hobbes than had anyone he knew. Urbane and polite, he deplored rudeness but loved to be challenged, and his response was almost unfailingly witty. What is more, it was unhurried, so that we learned most specifically the importance of leisure for learning.

In fact, most of what we learned was invested with the charm and potency of specificity. We did not so much talk about the larger aspects of the *Leviathan* as about certain difficult sentences or obscure passages. Since that seminar I have heard a great deal about Hobbes's absolutism, Hobbes's doctrine of political obligation, and the like. Such topics received due attention, but what I recall much more vividly is the way we entered into Hobbes's universe of discourse by thinking about what it meant to be afraid, what it felt like to give orders and to take them, and kindred matters.

Leo Strauss told us once that he doubted whether a book could be a good book if it contained no examples. Under his benign tutelage we began to think that we had not understood a general maxim until we could examine it in a specific instance. Everything called for illustration, and his own illustrations were a mixture of the apt, the eccentric, and the fantastic. They were fantastic, paradoxically enough, because they came from the world of our most immediate experience. It took me and my fellow students a while to get used to his habit of quoting Ann Landers, or of referring to scenes from movies (usually westerns or gangster films), or of quoting Groucho instead of Karl Marx, but our habituation to his procedure was always pleasant. Every class was, as I have suggested, rich in detail; I know he was familiar with Warburg's great saying that God resides in the minute detail.

As one became accustomed to his classes, one became accustomed to one's classmates. When I arrived at Chicago I was scared by the loneliness most graduate students know at one time or another. It was not only that I was in a strange place; it was that I no longer knew what the proper basis for lasting association was. It was in Leo Strauss's classes, as we were together pondering all those details with the exactitude he encouraged, as we were thinking and laughing (so much laughter in his classes!) that I found myself "becoming a member of a true community," as one fashionably puts it today: in those primitive days we thought of it as making friends. We argued long and brashly and wittily about matters that had come up in class. We talked and ate and drank together, and to this day most of my closest friends are those who shared with me the experience of being in the classes of Leo Strauss. I would not deny, in fact I would assert, that he had his share of obnoxious students: prigs, snobs, fools who thought they could success-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fully be Athenian gentlemen in Hyde Park, dogmatists in search of dogmas. But Leo Strauss snared more than his share of good souls, students one began to love. I had never before known personally that deep and abiding bonds can be forged around a book, when it becomes more than a book, when it turns into a world. Today I know that books and Leo Strauss, who turned books into a cosmos for us, are responsible for much of the happiness in my life. It is, of course, a knowledge that carries with it the realization that what I, and others, owe to Leo Strauss is beyond repayment. Perhaps it is not beyond gratitude, and not only to him. Years later, after I had stopped attending classes, someone very close to me, to whom I had given the transcript of Strauss's Spinoza seminar, said, "You ought to thank God for having had a teacher like that," and went on to bemoan her own bad luck. I knew what she meant.

When all is said and done, teaching turns out to be a rather occult activity. In moments of despondency we teachers think that teaching makes nothing happen, but evidence abounds to the effect that this is not the case. Leo Strauss changed those of us who took him seriously—but how? What did we learn from him? It is a difficult question, but since it is also a legitimate one, it requires an answer, no matter how fumbling that answer must of necessity be.

To begin with something apparently simple: Leo Strauss taught us how to read a book (his mastery of that art is dimly but definitely reflected in the masterliness of his book reviews). We learned that books were wholes, and that it was safest to assume that they were perfect wholes; for while even Homer may nod, he nods very rarely and not when we can see him. He knew the dangers of overinterpretation but that it has a cure because the house of cards one builds in such cases topples when either the interpreter or his well-meaning friends show it up as a house of cards. Underinterpretation, by contrast, is an irretrievable loss; one departs from a book without getting from it all it has to give, perhaps without getting from it the best it has to give. So we would read books carefully, line by line if possible, and we found that a great book is indeed a magic structure. It is wonderful—literally full of wonders, a house of many mansions, secret rooms, labyrinthine passages. Moreover, it is incredibly beautiful. By teaching us to see beauty, he elevated our taste, and we became a bit more pure without exerting any of the self-defeating straining-after-beauty that merely distorts.

Second, he taught us how to look at political things correctly. We had been staring at them long enough but not with understanding, at least not with *our* understanding. As Allan Bloom has put it, to study with Leo Strauss was an exercise in the restoration of the natural consciousness. He trained us to see things as they come to sight, to let them appear without the distortions modern opinion imposes upon them, and, yes, to let them *speak* to us. That meant we had to divest ourselves of many habits, including the habit of viewing things as budding social scientists. We learned what is, perhaps, hardest of all to learn: to become a bit more naïve again. Leo Strauss taught us to begin by considering political things in the perspective of the common citizen, though he also urged us to try to see further. So we learned to trust the superiority of proverbs again; we learned to talk in simple words again. Instead of "values," we talked of good and bad; we discussed unhappiness rather than alienation, and things ceased to be dysfunctional—they just did not work. Gradually we realized that Hegel was right when he insisted that, contrary to opinion, it is nonphilosophers who think abstractly, while only philosophers can do justice to the world in its marvelous particulars. In teaching us to see reality—and to understand that it was far richer than what so-called "realism" considers—he edified us in spite of, or because of, his repeated reminder to us that Hegel had excluded edification from the tasks of philosophy.

Some will say that what Leo Strauss did was to teach us to look at political things in a new way, *his* way—and they will be wrong. It is true that his own views were conservative, and that when all is said and done he preferred the ways and thoughts of Socrates to the thoughts and ways of any modern thinker.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is also true that he could be quite critical of the opinions of the Left, but that is because the highest education consists in an attempt to ascend from opinion to knowledge, and nobody can deny that the predominant opinions in the universities today are those of the Left. Those of us who came to know him knew that he was the very model of genuine open-mindedness (not to be confused with empty-headedness); his insistence that each book be approached on its own terms implies as much. As for the rest, I must bear personal witness. He advised each of us to do our dissertation on a great political thinker; this would mean that one was, as it were, going to spend several years living with a great man, which in turn was an education in itself. I chose Nietzsche for the shaky reason that he was the only philosopher I had ever read who had absolutely never bored me. Now, Nietzsche is the most vehement, eloquent, and profound modern opponent of Socrates. I remember an early discussion with Leo Strauss about my dissertation. In the course of our talk I finally found the courage to blurt out that I often felt that Nietzsche was right in his quarrel with Socrates. He replied he should hope I felt that way. I am by no means the only one of his students to whom he taught open-mindedness.

How did he do it all? For a long time I was mystified by the force of his effect on others and myself. After some years of teaching, that mystification increased because I realized he had violated many of the rules for good teaching that I had found useful and to which I continue to adhere. Thus, like many of *his* students, I believe in being somewhat severe with *mine;* yet he was most permissive, demanding almost nothing one did not feel like doing. (He never even collected the seven-page papers we prepared.) I believe in entering the life of my students not only by way of their minds but by socializing with them. He, by contrast, preserved his distance. He was always accessible if one needed help, but he was also a bit aloof. He almost never called a student by his first name, and it was unthinkable for us to call him by his first name, even after we had ourselves become teachers.

Nietzsche, to whom Leo Strauss brought me, has helped me to clear up the mystery. In aphorism 63 of *Beyond Good and Evil*, he writes, "Whoever is a teacher through and through takes all things seriously only in relation to his students—even himself" (Walter Kaufmann translation). Strauss took himself very seriously indeed, in the Socratic sense of "Know thyself"; he never ceased in his quest to understand the human things. Which is to say that he was a great teacher because he was more than a teacher: he was a philosopher. This, I think, accounts for that cluster of his characteristics which some have described as coldness but which is more justly called Olympian detachment.

Philosophers are difficult to understand because they bring back reports from regions most of us are not privileged to enter. We take our revenge on them for their agility and our clumsiness by freezing their teachings into doctrines. The more I studied with Leo Strauss, the more I came to realize he had no doctrine—or at least a most elusive one. That became strikingly clear to me at a party on October 13, 1973, in Toronto, at the home of Professor Allan Bloom, author of a masterful article on Leo Strauss in *Political Theory*. Among the guests were two most distinguished scholars, Professors Hans-Georg Gadamer of Heidelberg and Gershom Scholem of Jerusalem. The talk turned naturally to Leo Strauss, for he was to the end a very controversial man. The controversy was benevolent; there were no losers in the argument, only winners, but there *was* a good-natured argument. I will not say our side won, but Bloom, the others, and I were content not to lose. We were, so to speak, simultaneously defending Leo Strauss against the representatives of Heidegger and God.

Afterward we became aware that we ourselves disagreed as to the "position" of Leo Strauss. Not having seen him for several years, I decided to visit him within the next two weeks. But I was too late: he died a few days later. So I never had a chance to ask him where he really stood.

That was sad but not crucial. His books remain to be pondered. In a way he had taught me personally what is perhaps for me the most important thing: *reverence*. He showed me how to look up, and the things worthy of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reverence. Education is a little weak on inculcating reverence today, but that was one of the trends of the time against which he was in combat.

A number of us were proud of Leo Strauss, and we are proud of him still. He does not need us to perpetuate his memory, for his books will endure. What we can do, and do do, is teach as well as we can; and that to some degree means we teach his teachings to those who will transmit them to another generation. Perhaps Henry Adams was right when he wrote: "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

Hands

GREG KUZMA

If the tongues would still themselves
the hands could talk, who knows but that
they know the earth as well, can dance
in air better than words. Who knows,
they are never still. Who knows but
we assign them the wrong things,
places of would be permanence, improvements
of saw and nail, garbage to carry out.
For all this yet I knew once hands so
delicate, so sure on me, they brought me
song. And for that dignity again I would
be still.

GREG KUZMA's latest book of poems is entitled *Good News*. He edits and publishes the Best Cellar Press Pamphlet Series and the poetry magazine *Pebble*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Little Tour with Henry James

OTTO FRIEDRICH

I write these lines with the full consciousness of having no information whatever to offer. I do not pretend to enlighten the reader. . . . I hold any writer sufficiently justified who is himself in love with his topic.

—Portraits of Places

Fodor and Fielding and Frommer—and, above all, Michelin—the fat guidebooks keep offering the traveler to France their expert opinions on which cathedrals to see, where to eat dinner, and how to get the laundry done. In time, though, these volumes of authoritative pronouncements can become oppressive. One occasionally wonders how some more fallible voyager might have viewed a Loire château that he found to be locked, or how he passed his time when he had just missed his train and all of sunny Provence was swept by the mistral. Perhaps, then, one might still be guided by Henry James, who set out in the autumn of 1882 on what he modestly called "a little tour in France."

James's approach was magisterial, as was he himself—a heavily built figure, nearly bald, with a closely cropped brown beard and large, penetrating eyes. Ivan Turgenev, whom he visited at Bougival on the eve of his departure, wrote to a friend that James was ". . . as amiable as ever. But he has grown enormously fat." He was already an experienced journalist, of the feuilleton sort, having served several years as a Paris correspondent for the *New York Tribune* and written two volumes of travel articles. More important, his career as a novelist was finally beginning to flourish. *The Portrait of a Lady* had just been published in the previous year, with considerable success, and he wrote in his journal that he could well remember being "an ingenuous youth . . . passionately eager for what life might bring," and that "life has brought . . . a measurable part of what I dreamed of then." Despite these autumnal reflections, however, he was still only thirty-nine. He had yet to experience the failure of *The Bostonians* or the disaster of *Guy Domville*. And so, since he lived by his writing, he cheerfully boarded a railroad train in Paris and headed south.

I took an old and unread copy of James's *Little Tour* along with me on a recent trip to France, but not until I had landed in the white plastic wilderness of de Gaulle Airport, rented a little Simca, and fought my way through the torrents of Parisian traffic to the Loire Valley did I actually open my century-old guidebook and find that James, too, had started his voyage in Tours. "It is a very agreeable little city," he observed. "Few towns of its size are more ripe, more complete, or, I should suppose, in better humor with themselves. . . . It is truly the capital of its smiling province; a region of easy abundance, of good living, of genial, comfortable, optimistic, rather indolent opinions."

Despite all its amiable fertility, though—its abundance of apple trees and lettuces and mild red wines and all those other riches that grow along the river that James described as

OTTO FRIEDRICH's newest book, *Going Crazy: An Inquiry into Madness in Our Time,* will be published by Simon & Schuster in January. A senior editor at *Time,* Mr. Friedrich is now working on a biography of Mrs. Henry Adams.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"full, tranquil, powerful, bending in large slow curves and sending back half the light of the sky"—despite all this, the Loire Valley, like much of France, still bears the scars and memories of armed conflict. Our hotel in Tours was on the Place de la Résistance, and our window overlooked the Rue des Fusillés, and these were only the newest memorials to death. James, who was traveling through France less than a century after Robespierre's Reign of Terror, and scarcely more than a decade after Bismarck's triumph over Napoleon III, found it "astonishing" that the Germans had advanced so far as to occupy Tours "during that terrible winter" of 1870, and he added: "It is hardly too much to say that, wherever one goes in certain parts of France, one encounters two great historic facts: one is the Revolution; the other is the German invasion."

These great historic facts are more apparent in the provinces than in Paris. Time moves more quickly in the metropolis, for the city is more isolated from the natural cycle of the seasons, and the past is more quickly obliterated. There is a Place de la Bastille, of course, but it is little more than a noisy traffic circle, without a trace of the dungeon that once stood there, and hardly anyone remembers that the Place de la Concorde was once the Place de la Révolution, resounding to the clang of the guillotine. The Porte de Saint Cloud, like all the gateways to Paris, implies a walled city, but there are no longer any walls to impede the traffic flowing out to the suburbs. Driving through that vanished gateway on the road to Chartres, one eventually finds in the great cathedral not only the glowing rose windows that inspired Henry Adams to proclaim that Mary herself had built this church, but also, in the candle-lit Chapel of the Virgin, long rows of statues with their stone faces smashed in by the angry revolutionaries of two centuries ago. There is also new evidence of James's other great historic fact. A few blocks from the cathedral, an ungainly stone angel grieves for the memory of Jean Moulin, once a prefect of the Loire, then an organizer of the resistance tortured to death by the Gestapo. But the spirit of the Virgin, and the demands of commerce, and the passage of time all join to soften historic facts. Busloads of pilgrims now arrive daily from Cologne, Munich, and Berlin, and a sign outside the cathedral announces guided tours in German. *Treffpunkt hier,* it says.

The revolutionaries of 1789 made a passionate attempt to change the nature of time. Just as they smashed the statues in Chartres, they abolished the Christian seasons, rebaptizing the months with names like Ventôse and Pluviôse. They ended the sequence of years A.D. and began again with the year I, a statement of faith that was ended by Napoleon in the year XII. The seasons that nurtured the vines and flowers of France remained as before. High on the walls of Chartres, in the dirt that has accumulated in the crevices between the stones, a tenacious weed called *giroflée sauvage* brings forth its bright yellow flowers every spring, among the buttresses and the gargoyles, far beyond the reach of human hands.

The tourist, too, is making an attempt to stop time. To land in the futuristic temple of de Gaulle Airport and then to drive to the Loire is to abandon the contemporary world and enter the domain of Francis I. Almost every castle wall bears his heraldic salamander, or the ermine of Anne of Brittany. Yet although one thinks of the Loire châteaux as a historic entity, a series of architectural statements that have outlasted their creators, the châteaux themselves are as vulnerable to time as the giant trees that surround them.

To the traveler coming from Paris, Blois is the first of the great châteaux to be encountered. It once controlled an important bridgehead, and the Counts of Blois ruled an area extending from Chartres to Tours. They claimed the kingdom of Burgundy and fought at the siege of Acre. The surviving château, however, was built mainly by the Valois kings, notably Francis I, and it enchanted James. "As you cross its threshold you step straight into the sunshine and storm of the French Renaissance . . . ," he wrote. "In the middle of it, or rather a little to the left, rises the famous winding staircase . . . which even the ages which most misused it must vaguely have admired. . . . This exquisite, this extravagant, this transcendant piece of archi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tecture is the most joyous utterance of the French Renaissance."

The intrepid James entered the courtyard "by jumping over the walls," but such escapades are not permitted today. One stands in line to buy a ticket, then waits in the courtyard for the next tour to begin. The courtyard is filled, as in many of these châteaux, with bored American students, twitching and giggling. Finding themselves on gravel, they begin picking up pebbles and throwing them at each other. The guide disapproves, prissily, but the students do not pay much attention. They shuffle after him from room to room, prisoners of culture.

Because of its very celebrity, Blois was among the first châteaux to be, in James's words, "unsparingly restored." Like many others, it had survived the storm of the Revolution only to be turned into a barracks by Napoleon. "Whitewashed, mutilated, dishonored," as James put it, "the castle of Blois may be said to have escaped simply with its life." While modern restorers have sought primarily to reestablish what once existed, the nineteenth-century restorers of Blois tried to create a château that fitted their own romantic visions of what a Renaissance palace ought to have been. So the walls that were bare in the times of King Francis, or perhaps hung with tapestries of scenes from the life of Moses, now gleam with brightly painted suns and stars and fleurs-de-lis. "This terrible process," as James called it, "[was] a work of great energy and cost [but] the universal freshness is a discord, a false note; it seems to light up the dusky past with an unnatural glare." The guide who now leads us through these Medici bedchambers emphasizes the anachronism, and his own distaste. All the decorations are "*fantaisiste,*" he says. They could, of course, be scraped away, but one suspects that they will not be. Perhaps the French authorities believe that a château once restored has been restored forever. Or perhaps, as with the baroque facades that both augment and disfigure some of the classical temples of Sicily, there is by now a certain aesthetic interest in observing the nineteenth century's view of the sixteenth century.

One of the most striking aspects of Blois is not architectural but ghostly, for it was here that King Henry III disposed of the challenge of the duke of Guise by having him murdered. "Every spot connected with the murder," James reported, ". . . is pointed out by a small, shrill boy." The uniformed guide still performs the same function, and I particularly savored his recital because I had been raised on a family legend that the duke of Guise was one of my ancestors.

The duke arrived at the château early on the morning of December 23, 1588, after spending the night with one of Catherine de Médicis' ladies-in-waiting. The Estates General, meeting in Blois that day, were expected to impeach King Henry and depose him in favor of the duke. The duke was eating preserved plums by the fireplace in the Council Chamber—there, that vast and ornate fireplace over there—when he was notified that the king wanted to see him in his study, on the far side of the royal bedchamber. As the duke passed through the bedchamber, eight of the royal assassins rose and saluted him; as he opened the door to the study, he confronted twelve more assassins awaiting him with drawn swords. Turning back, he saw that the first group had drawn their daggers from their cloaks. Several of the assassins seized the duke's arms and legs, but he was a large and powerful man. He threw off four of them, and then, stabbed over and over again, dragged several more of the clinging attackers to the far end of the room before collapsing at the foot of the king's bed. The king finally emerged from his study and slapped the dead man in the face. "God, how big he is!" he said. "He looks even bigger dead than alive." He went to tell the good news to his mother, Catherine de Médicis, and then he went to hear mass in the Chapel of Saint Calais. "What episode was ever more perfect—looked at as a dramatic occurrence—than the murder of the Duke of Guise?" James wondered. "The insolent prosperity of the victim; the weakness, the vices, the terrors, of the author of the deed; the perfect execution of the plot; the accumulation of horror in what followed it—render it, as a crime, one of the classic things."

No restorers can scrub the bloodstains from the royal châteaux of the Loire. Nor do they

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

try, for bloodshed that is old enough to appear romantic is a valuable item in the tourist traffic. Still, the killing of my supposed ancestor in the royal bedroom at Blois serves as a reminder that much of the destruction in this land came not from the foreign invaders but rather from the ferocious civil strife that repeatedly ravaged France during the long centuries between the fall of Rome and the Revolution.

Amboise provides another example. It is perhaps the most charming town in the Loire Valley, and the château towering above the river is undoubtedly the most formidable. This, too, fell into use as a barracks and then a prison, and an old lady at James's hotel in Tours described it to him as "very, very dirty, but very curious." James toured the "blank old apartments" and was greatly impressed. "The platforms, the bastions, the terraces, the high-niched windows and balconies, the hanging gardens and dizzy crenellations, of this complicated structure, keep you in perpetual intercourse with an immense horizon. . . . The clustered houses at the base of the rock are like crumbs that have fallen from a well-laden table." Here, during the brief reign of the sixteen-year-old Francis II and the semiofficial regency of the duke of Guise, a number of Protestant landowners from Brittany came to demand the right of religious dissent. The château is all refurbished now, filled with Renaissance tapestries and solemn oak chests, but there has been no need to refurbish the iron balcony outside the royal chambers where the Breton Protestants met their fate. Some were tied in sacks and thrown from the heights down into the Loire, while others were left hanging from the balcony for the entertainment of their executioners. It is said that Catherine de Médicis came after dinner to watch the spectacle, bringing along her sixteen-year-old daughter-in-law, Mary Stuart. James discounted such tales as "rumors," but he added that "there is little doubt that the future Queen of Scots learned the first lessons of life at a horrible school."

And Chinon. "We never went to Chinon . . . ," James wrote, a rather disarming confession for a guidebook writer to make. "We planned it a dozen times; but the weather interfered, or the trains didn't suit, or one of the party was fatigued of the day before." He tried, nonetheless, to describe it on the basis of photographs: "The castle of Chinon . . . appears to me as an enormous ruin, a mediaeval fortress of the extent almost of a city. It covers a hill above the Vienne, and after being impregnable in its time is indestructible today. . . . To the castle, the lover of the picturesque is earnestly recommended to direct his steps. But one always misses something. . . ."

I should make a similar confession. I never went to Chaumont (where James, having found the gates locked, could only "trudge up a hill . . . where, over the paling of a garden, we might obtain an oblique and surreptitious view of a small portion of the castle walls"); but I did direct my steps to Chinon, for it was here that Joan of Arc first encountered the dauphin, who was to become Charles VII. Here occurred the famous recognition scene in which the dauphin tested Joan by hiding behind some courtiers while an imposter installed himself on the throne. The photographs had misled James, as photographs usually do. The ruin is neither enormous nor indestructible. It is little more than a hollowed-out shell, and as the troops of young Americans straggle in through the gate on a warm spring afternoon, they can find little to distract them except a pair of peacocks that wander solemnly around the little courtyard, ready to be photographed. Of the royal council chamber where the dauphin received Joan there is nothing left but a few stone steps leading up to a roofless, unwalled floor, open to the sun, with one surviving fireplace at the far end.

James also noted, from his distance, that Rabelais had honored Chinon by being born there, but ministries of fine arts are less concerned about such things. I found no official birthplace and no official memorials, only a shopping center with a large sign that said *Rabelais Centre Commercial*. What would James have made of that if he had come to Chinon and seen it? About the same, perhaps, as he would have made of the vast conglomeration of concrete and plastic that has arisen near my home in Long Island and calls itself the Walt Whitman Shopping Center. Will there

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ever be, somewhere near the official birthplace in New York, a Henry James Shopping Center?

The master was not greatly impressed by Poitiers. His hotel was dirty, and "a dirty inn has always seemed to me the dirtiest of human things." He found the old hilltop town "as crooked and straggling as you please, but these advantages are not accompanied with any very salient features or any great wealth of architecture." James declared that "the most charming thing at Poitiers" was Blossac Park, an eighteenth-century public garden with "a beautiful sweep of view over the surrounding country." Here he sat and reflected on what had inspired him to come to Poitiers, the battle in which the Black Prince, Edward of Wales, outnumbered by more than two-to-one, had defeated and captured King John of France. (The battlefield is not a great public memorial, of course, for very few nations commemorate their defeats; there is no Waterloo Station in Paris, just as there is no Gare d'Austerlitz in Vienna.) James confessed himself "very much at a loss" as to why "the very name of [Poitiers] had always caused my blood gently to tingle." He said that it would be "carrying the feelings of race to quite inscrutable lengths when a vague American permits himself an emotion because more than five centuries ago, on French soil, one rapacious Frenchman got the better of another. Edward was a Frenchman as well as John, and French were the cries that urged each of the hosts to fight." Even after these disavowals, however, he added that the Black Prince's victory "was something done, I know not how justly, for England; and what was done in the fourteenth century for England was done also for New York."

In pursuit of this odd view from the ramparts of Poitiers (was it not the French, after all, who helped eject King George's troops from New York?), I made my way to Blossac Park and found it still as charming as it was in James's day. The red and yellow tulips stood in formal parade, as suits the French taste, but modified by gentler beds of pansies and forget-me-nots. A small *jardin zoologique* in one corner boasted a modest collection of wallabies, pheasants, and Senegalese goats. But the view from the ramparts showed only a panorama of the French *banlieux:* gray-white factories, boxlike housing projects, and the orange-tiled roofs of what pass for suburban "villas." On consulting my map, I realized that the vanished battlefield lay well off to the east, and that James had been staring nostalgically in the wrong direction.

It would be possible, I think, to recount a whole tour of France in terms of its gardens, for gardens tell as much as vaulted roofs or tapestried halls about how past generations chose to decorate their surroundings. The most striking aspect of French gardens, of course, is their extreme formality, their constant denial of nature's first law, which is that of uncontrolled growth. At Versailles, all the evergreens bordering on Le Nôtre's great esplanade of fountains are clipped into perfect cones, a series of toy trees marching up and down the slopes like toy soldiers. At Chenonceaux, where the box hedges are all sculpted into the shape of reversed G clefs, the keepers of Diane de Poitiers's "Italian" gardens are so solicitous of their sprouting rose bushes and their beds of daffodils that no visitor is allowed to walk along the flawless diagonal paths. At Nîmes, finally, the designer dispensed with plants almost entirely. Using as his source the gently bubbling spring of Nemausus—"the prettiest thing in the world," James called it—he worked entirely with water, leading it through a series of stone arcades and gravel promenades, and leaving only a small area around the entrance to be planted in that exotic vegetation known as grass.

The most beautiful garden in the Loire Valley could not have been seen by James, however, for it was torn up during the nineteenth century to be replaced by the then fashionable savagery of a freely growing *Jardin anglais*. In due time, a Doctor Carvallo acquired this Château de Villandry and tore up the *Jardin anglais* to re-create the original sixteenth-century garden. It was, and now again is, built on three different levels, extending over some fifteen acres. The top level is all designed in water, a lake, inlets, fountains, waterfalls. The second level is all hedges, carved into dozens of different de-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

signs—the fleur-de-lis, the cross of Languedoc, and even a series of heart-shaped patterns devoted to the varieties of love: true love, angry love, demented love. . . . At the bottom level is the kitchen garden, where fruits, flowers, and vegetables all grow in alternating beds, three by three, the strawberry plants neighboring to beans and daisies, according to the appropriate categories of color and size. Standing on the rampart and looking down on these acres of herbal chivalry, one raises an inevitable question: Who was the inspired Doctor Carvallo?

"He was a Spaniard," the guide shrugs, "a physician, although I don't think he ever practiced medicine."

"And rich? Or how did he get so much money?"

"Rich? No, he was the son of a baker. But he married a millionaire's daughter from Philadelphia."

How Gilbert Osmond would have savored the gardens of Villandry. Or Merton Densher. Or Prince Amerigo.

As James progressed southward, he seemed to become more and more discontented. He had left behind his "companions" (Fanny Kemble, the actress, and Mrs. Owen Wister, the mother of the novelist), and so he had nobody to complain to about the untidiness of provincial inns or the vagaries of the French railroads ("perverse, capricious, exasperating").

He liked the Huguenot fishing port of La Rochelle because it was "Dutch and delightful" and "extraordinarily clean" and "a quite original mixture of brightness and dulness," but the more impressive city of Bordeaux left him dissatisfied. It is, he said, in words that remain true today, "a big, rich, handsome, imposing commercial town, with . . . an air of almost depressing opulence." So on to Toulouse, where depressing opulence gave way to depressing poverty. He found an Italian quality to the city, but his comparisons were invidious. "Toulouse has a little of this Italian expression, but not enough to give a colour to its dark, dirty, crooked streets, which are irregular without being eccentric. . . . Toulouse has no architecture; the houses . . . have no particular style. . . . The shops are probably better than the Turinese, but the people are not so good. Stunted, shabby, rather vitiated looking, they have none of the personal richness of the sturdy Piedmontese; and I will take this occasion to remark that in the course of a journey of several weeks in the French provinces I rarely encountered a well-dressed male. Can it be possible that republics are unfavorable to a certain attention to one's boots and one's beard?"

The neighboring cities were even worse. James judged Narbonne to be "a *sale petite ville* in all the force of the term." All the hotels were "stuffed with winedealers," so he had to spend hours trying to find a room. He finally sat down to dinner with "a hundred hungry marketers, fat, brown, greasy men with a good deal of the soil of Languedoc adhering to their hands. . . . There were swarms of flies; the viands had the strongest odour." Moving on to Montpellier, he found it "charming," for no particular reason, but partly because "I reflected that I had washed my hands of Narbonne." One of his difficulties was that he felt the Revolution had corrupted the French, filling many of them with "a sinister passion for theories." He observed that although the average Frenchman had been "permeated in a high degree by civilization," he was still "untouched by the desire which one finds in the Englishman, in proportion as he rises in the world, to approximate to the figure of the gentleman."

It is easy to mock such snobbery, but it illustrates not only James's limitations in understanding Republican France (he hardly gives us any observations at all on the workings of French politics or society) but also his myopia in regarding the past. Even if one decides that it is the natural function of the tourist to view France almost entirely in terms of its historic buildings, the significance of those buildings may lie not in their architectural details, but in the fate of the people who once occupied them. Toulouse today is probably even more grimy than it was a century ago, but what James seems hardly to have noticed is that Toulouse is the capital of a conquered land and that the whole southwest still reverberates, like Wales or Sicily, with the echoes of its lost independence.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The history of Toulouse is detestable, saturated with blood and perfidy," James writes—but then no more. It is a sentence one might apply to any fallen capital. In fact, Toulouse was once the center of a culture at least as rich as that of France. Its rule extended from the Atlantic to the Rhone; it enjoyed its own language, its own court of troubadours. The cosmopolitan towns of Languedoc and Provence were inclined to tolerate Jews, skeptics, heretics. Thus their downfall. In 1208, a papal legate assigned to preach against heresy was speared by a knight, possibly acting for Count Raymond VI of Toulouse. That was the pretext for the outraged Pope Innocent III to unleash the Albigensian Crusade, a fearful onslaught of north against south, orthodoxy against diversity. It began with the sack of Béziers, in which all the men, women, and children were slaughtered, in accord with the Crusaders' slogan: "Kill them all—God will recognize his own." Some thirty-five years later, a few hundred of the heretics known as Cathars were besieged in their last major stronghold, the mountaintop fortress of Montségur. For nine months they withstood the siege, and then the Crusaders began working their way up the mountain. At the end, the heretics stoically accepted the Crusaders' ultimatum: all who converted would be given short prison sentences by the Inquisition; all the others would be burned.

There is still no road up the mountain, and so one must leave the car at the base and begin climbing upward through the muddy gulleys that rake the slopes. The mountain is about two thousand feet high, almost straight up, an angle of perhaps eighty degrees, and as one claws upward, clinging to twisted outgrowths of box shrubs, the fog thickens. Before long, the ground becomes invisible. At the top, finally, there is an unbelievable stillness. The pentagonal walls—this was once a temple for sun worshipers, and on Midsummer's Eve, June 21, the sun shines directly through the eastern and western windows—stand as witnesses, jagged and roofless. The gates are open. The floor is a sea of mud. The fog swirls around the ramparts. There is nobody here, nobody and nothing, except, on top of the highest wall that looks out over a sea of fog, the spoor of previous tourists: two orange peels. The last 215 heretics were led down from here in chains and burned alive in the field at the foot of the mountain. There a small plaque commemorates them in the lost language:

Als Catars
Als Martirs
Del Pur Amor
Crestian
16 Mars 1244

James recorded a few details of the Albigensian Crusade on his arrival in Carcassonne, but he added, a bit disingenuously, "I am not one of those who, as I said just now, have a head for such things." He was fascinated, however, by the walled town itself—founded by the Romans, fortified by the Visigoths, and now the largest preserved fortress in Europe:

> We passed along the battlements . . . ascended and descended towers, crawled under arches, peered out of loopholes, lowered ourselves into dungeons, halted in all sorts of tight places while the purpose of something or other was described to us. It was very curious, very interesting; above all it was very pictorial. . . . One vivid challenge, at any rate, it flings down before you; it calls upon you to make up your mind on the matter of restoration. For myself, I have no hesitation; I prefer in every case the ruined, however ruined, to the reconstructed, however splendid. . . . The one is history, the other is fiction; and I like the former the better of the two—it is so much more romantic.

I think not. It is the fiction created by reconstruction that is more romantic, if romance is what one is looking for, as James was. "The restoration of Carcassonne," he said, after a stroll about the ramparts in the moonlight, "is a splendid achievement. . . . There can be nothing better than this . . . a wonderful evocation." And so we come to Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, who created a considerable part of the medieval France that we now admire. Born in 1814, he became an architect, a student of Greek and Roman relics, an expert in the Gothic. His masterpiece is Notre Dame de Paris, to which he devoted eleven years, but his hand can be seen all over France, at Narbonne and Amiens, Bordeaux and Avignon. To Viollet-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

le-Duc there was no question of falsifying old buildings for the sake of artificial restoration. Ruins remain completely intact only when, as at Montségur, they are far from humanity. Or when, as with the sacked château of the Marquis de Sade, which still towers over a haunted stone village in a valley of Provence, humanity remains indifferent. In a place like Carcassonne Viollet-le-Duc found the moats around the fortifications already filled with slum hovels, and the villagers felt free to tear stones from the crumbling ramparts of the Visigoths to build their garden walls. His only choice, therefore, was to re-create an artificial medieval city or to let its ruins slowly vanish from the earth.

This process of restoration is now continuing all over France (the influence of André Malraux?). At the mountaintop shrine of Rocamadour, where such pilgrims as Saint Dominic and Saint Bernard, Philip the Fair and Henry Plantagenet all climbed on their knees up the hundreds of stone stairs to the grave of Saint Amadour (said to be the publican Zacheus), the various statues and relics were all destroyed by marauding troops of Englishmen, Protestants, and revolutionaries (the cadaver of Saint Amadour refused to burn and finally had to be smashed with a hammer)—here everything has been rebuilt, and the pilgrim who labors up the stairs today (there is an elevator for the less hardy) is greeted at every way-station with new offerings of postcards.

On the Riviera, similarly, even such a relatively insignificant town as Eze, which was a jumble of dirt-floored hovels as recently as twenty-five years ago and remarkable mainly for its view over the Mediterranean, is now all stone-walled summer homes, expensive restaurants, mosaic streets, and souvenir shops. In Saint Paul, not far away, the same transformation is still under way, almost within sight of the Calders and Giacommettis and Mirós that sprout in the gardens of the Maeght Foundation, a bit higher up in the hills. A tourist who wanders a few blocks away from Saint Paul's rows of boutiques and postcard stands is likely to encounter a squad of grunting Algerians tending the cement mixer that is building a new medieval house before his eyes.

The restoration of Carcassonne began earlier, and so the implications of the process are more fully developed. As the guide leads his flock of tourists along the ramparts, pausing every now and then before a tower of nineteenth-century masonry to give a lecture on the arts of medieval defense and to point out the familiar sluices for the boiling oil, we reach, eventually, the corner of the fortress where this whole stage setting becomes, in fact, a stage setting. Behind the eleventh-century Church of Saint Nazaire there was once a monastery, wrecked during the Revolution, and in 1908, long after both James and Viollet-le-Duc, the restorers decided to build an open-air theater here. After World War II they refurbished the whole thing, installing some six hundred black bucket seats on the concrete steps of the amphitheater, and now there is a festival every summer, with *son et lumière*. "The Comédie-Française has played here," the guide says proudly. "*Hamlet, Macbeth, La Reine Morte. . . .*"

As we move backward through time, from the ramps of de Gaulle Airport, to the Renaissance on the Loire, to the Crusades in the southwest, we watch, as on a film in reverse motion, the disintegration of France from a modern nation into a collection of warring feudal provinces, and so we finally reach, in the Roman ruins of Provence, the spectacle of France as a minor colony. Nîmes, for example, was founded by the legionnaires who had been discharged with a grant of land after Octavian's victory over Antony and Cleopatra; hence the heraldic appearance, on city walls, of a crocodile in chains.

James observed the architectural relics of the Roman provinces with the conventional approbation of nineteenth-century aesthetics. The charming city of Nîmes struck him as not being "a town with, as I may say, a general figure," but the arena impressed him as "astounding," and the little temple known as the *Maison Carrée* appeared "perfectly felicitous." The Roman theater at Arles "seemed to me one of the most charming and touching ruins I had ever beheld." The theater at Orange was "magnificent in its ruin," and the triumphal arch was, "as Roman monuments go, remarkably perfect." Con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

templating such things, James enjoyed letting his imagination wander. "There was a certain contagion of antiquity in the air," he wrote of Nîmes, "and among the ruins of baths and temples . . . the picture of a splendid paganism seemed to glow." Yet there was a quality about the stridently aggressive Romans that must have reminded James of the America he had only recently decided to abandon. He described that quality, as best he could, in describing the celebrated arches of the Pont du Garde. "They are unspeakably imposing, and nothing could well be more Roman. The hugeness, the solidity, the unexpectedness, the monumental rectitude of the whole thing leave you nothing to say. . . . I remained there an hour and got a complete impression. . . . It came to pass that . . . I discovered in it a certain stupidity, a vague brutality. That element is rarely absent from great Roman work, which is wanting in the nice adaptation of the means to the end. The means are always exaggerated; the end is so much more than attained."

I myself share many of James's reservations about provincial Roman ruins. The Colosseum in Rome still seems to reverberate to the cries of Christian martyrs, but the arenas in Arles or Nîmes do not echo so richly. One marvels at their state of preservation, and at the fact that this vanished race left such powerful monuments to its presence, but there is a curious impersonality about these various arches and amphitheaters. There is little passion in them. They are, simply, public buildings. Still, one feels a kind of duty to inspect them, and so, arriving in Orange late at night, I determined to visit the Roman theater as soon as it opened on the following morning. Its exterior wall, towering more than one hundred feet high in the moonlight, was said to be the best preserved Roman wall in all of Europe, and Louis XIV had described it as "the most beautiful wall in the kingdom." When I arrived there in the morning, however, all the approaches were cordoned off for a parade.

The sky was as "magnificently black" as the one that James had seen over Vaucluse, and a raw wind scraped across the Place des Frères Mounet as the first hard-faced soldiers came marching into position, loudly singing a kind of dirge. Most of them were in khaki, with baggy trousers tucked into their boots, but a good number wore those colorful costumes that have long given the French army a look of absurdity—white kepis, red and green epaulets, maroon pants, blue hats ornamented with plumes of white feathers. "*Halt!*" an officer shouted as each new contingent reached its place in front of the worn old theater. This was, it turned out, the First Cavalry Regiment of the Foreign Legion, which I thought had long ago been disbanded, the last remnant of the German invasions of France. They were celebrating some anniversary of some long-forgotten battle of Camerone (in Mexico, someone said), and the festivities were to last for two days. The celebration would reach its climax, according to the announcement on the wall of a nearby pharmacy, in the selection of "Miss Kepi Blanc."

The last oddity in James's little tour is that he never went to the Riviera. Perhaps it was then a less inevitable part of the tourist itinerary than it is today. Cannes, after all, was still a small fishing village in 1834 when Lord Brougham, avoiding Nice because of an outbreak of cholera, stopped at Cannes, found it charming, and built himself a house there. In any case, James turned north from Provence and concluded his tour, mysteriously, in Dijon.

But I went on to inspect the traffic jams of Nice, and the bathers packed onto the beach at Cap d'Antibes, and the miles of tawdry villas crawling up the mountainside above Monte Carlo. Henry James liked the rich, and he liked the way the rich live, but now that the spread of wealth has brought hundreds of thousands of people swarming to the Riviera, I kept wondering what James would have made of it all. Would he have regarded the rulers of Monaco as yet another pair of his own creations? Would he have gambled his meager royalties at their casino? Would he have taken tea with those elderly ladies who sit on terraces in Menton? Or stripped off his elegant waistcoat and lumbered down to the beach? On an idle afternoon in Nice, I wandered into the English

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

library, a deserted, subterranean sort of place, tended by a rather taciturn old gentleman in greenish tweeds and filled with bound sets of writers like Somerset Maugham and P. G. Wodehouse. There was, of course, a copy of James's *Little Tour,* and next to it stood an equally obscure work by his friend Edith Wharton. It was entitled *A Motor Flight through France.* As I opened it, I saw that Mrs. Wharton had transcended James's difficulties with the French railroads. "The motor-car," she began, with all the enthusiasm of a tourist setting out in 1907, "has restored the romance of travel."

Dear Memory

I. A. Richards

Oldest, kindest Friend,
Ever more faithful to the end.
But not in bringing back
What think I lack:
Facts, figures, places.
Names and faces . . .
And all the rest.
Not so;
But because you know
What's best
Forgot.

I. A. RICHARDS, the distinguished critic, is University Professor Emeritus at Harvard. He began writing verse after entering his seventh decade. His collected verse, *Internal Colloquies,* was published in 1970.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thoughts on First Passing the Hundredth Page of *Finnegans Wake*

HOWARD NEMEROV

"You is feeling like you was
lost in the bush, boy?"

As far as I have got in this book, I've had every feeling in the book: fascination and despair, pleasure, charm, bitter resentment, resistance to reading one inch farther; great admiration, terrible boredom, simple fury at frustration, childish delight at resolving this or that small trouble, and so on. I haven't that ideal insomnia (page 120), and I'd swear there are stretches of half a dozen pages where Joyce keeps the sentence from concluding by every device known to man only *pour me faire enrager* (the first question in the quiz, pages 126–39, to which the answer is "Finn MacCool," is a resounding instance and a bloody bore as well); yet when I see that this is what he's doing I generally have to grin and go on—the grin largely affectionate if keeping the ghost of a snarl.

Chiefly, though, I am amazed. The energy and geniality of the book are just amazing; there's nothing like it in literature, and comparisons (Rabelais, Burton, Shikespower, Seudodanto, Anonymoses) don't seem to mean much. It's a help, too, that so many places are so helplessly funny: the guided tour of the Willingdone Museyroom, the dialogue of Mutt and Jute, the interview with Sylvia Silence the girl detective; and not only such set pieces, but ever so many passing moments else.

Against that, I keep the sense I began with—that once you've got the idea, the stuff is a good deal easier to write than to read, and maybe even more fun as well. Of course, Joyce had the idea. But it's odd, all the same, that this way of using language never took any real hold among writers; it would seem a natural for people who keep complaining that the center will not hold . . . poets ought to have taken to it right off. I guess the difficulty might be the same that people experienced when they tried to imitate some of the methods of composition in *Ulysses*, especially the celebrated and misnamed "stream of consciousness": they found not only that what streams do is run down, but also that their very own characters were merely thinking the thoughts of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus. So here. If you disorganized your language in this way you would almost helplessly do so in the same dactylic and anapestic rhythms. Besides, a major point of the book is that there's only one dream; Joyce has dreamed it for us, and we shall have to wait till the end of days for the second coming and the redreamer (oops).

I remember getting a great deal of pleasure from hearing passages read aloud by a drunken painter (his audience wasn't so sober either). Taken in a relaxed and boozy way, the book is marvelous at producing the illusion of understanding; traveling at that speed you don't unpack the portmanteaux, you just listen to the clicking of the wheels. For study, however, I've found it handy indeed to have commentaries and specialized

HOWARD NEMEROV, professor of English at Washington University, is the author of many books of fiction, nonfiction, and verse. His newest works are the forthcoming *The Western Approaches* and *Figures of Thought*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dictionaries and the like, although I also have some doubts about their ultimate usefulness, which I'll come to later. Meanwhile, I gratefully acknowledge the help of the authors of *A Skeleton Key* and of Miss Glasheen in her *Second Census of Finnegans Wake*. Also of numerous writers who give me a sense of the whole without dealing so closely with the text, beginning with John Peale Bishop (who must have written his splendid review-essay about the day the book came out) and coming up to Burgess's *Re Joyce*.

That the book should be so full of shit doesn't seem to be much of a bother, possibly because the leading thematic image of history as a dungheap, garbage midden, tumulus, barrow, and so on is so pleasantly what Kenneth Burke would call a comic corrective to those newspapery notions that confuse the sordid with tragedy. This image has its marvelous figurative extensions, too, as in the account of Waterloo, where the sounds of battle are also the sounds of defecation (cf. chamberpot-thundermug; and our author, in a first fine instance of his flair for such expansions and reductions, called his early poems *Chambermusic*).

In a number of ways that puzzle and a little bother me, there is a curious doubleness to the book. Not in the details, where there is often a greater multiplicity than that without causing trouble, but in the idea of the whole. I'll try to explain.

You can either read along, preferably aloud, getting a sort of sense of what's going forward (not always, but often); or you can focus on the resolution of little bits, single words or single phrases; but if you do that you very often forget what the whole situation is and lose the narrative.

Again, you can either read with the help of commentaries which emphasize the large cyclic and repetitive motions of the whole, or (with or without commentaries) try to figure it out inch by inch (quite literally; it helps to have a bookmark keyed to the numbers of the lines). For instance, you can either hold recurring details and motifs in your head till you begin to know something about the centers from which the single reference radiates, which is a horrible hard business, or you can stop the first time you see something famous and clearly labeled *thematic* (such as numbers: 1132, 29, the Four) and look it up in a commentary—from which, by the way, you are liable not to get so very much joy as all that.

Similarly, it is ever so easy to acquire a glib familiarity with Viconian cycles, the coincidence of opposites, the reciprocity between death and resurrection; but when you have come to know such things you haven't come to know much more than a set of clichés that in one way and another have been the cant terms of world historians from Augustine to Spengler. And if you don't consent to believe that mastering this sort of junk is learning, you are left with one anecdote after another in which just this sort of junk is (often marvelously) exemplified in street fights, landscapes, archaeological surveys, rumors, lectures in paleography and textual criticism, et cetera (and incidentally, for all Joyce's emphasis on low life he seems most often most at home—so far as I've read, anyhow—doing a parody of the pedant).

The same doubleness appears among readers, in the division of opinion (one could scarcely view it as an argument, for the two sides don't talk to one another) between those who want to read *Finnegans Wake* "as a novel" and the other party—roughly speaking, the cabalists, the cryptanalysts, the people who use the book more or less as one might use *The Book of Changes*. (Like the man I met once who earnestly assured me that he wasn't at all interested in literature, only in *Finnegans Wake*. Well, some days I feel the same way about music and Bach.) A learned friend, who tells me, and I believe him, that he has read all "the literature" without ever having more than glanced through the book itself, is firmly of the opinion that it can and must be read "as a novel" about an aging man, his wife and children, and—what? The resolution, I guess, during a night's dreaming, of his troubles in reconciling himself to the passage into old age and thence out of life. But against this idea of reading it "for the story," as it were, you have the equally firm opinion of Thornton Wilder, which tells us severely that we are not really in the book at all until we've logged a thousand hours at it. My trou-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ble just now is that I don't find anywhere, as far as I've gone, a place where the two extreme views harmonize: where, that is, the maximum rub-your-nose-in-it-complexity-unto-chaos of how things really happen in this vale of tears becomes one with the absolute of abstraction also claimed for the work, the place at which history really does repeat itself—and does nothing else—because every story is a family story.

But now, having expressed these doubts about how the book works, I should say on the other side that *Finnegans Wake* is doing one of the things a masterpiece probably ought to do, which is to make me think some thoughts I had not thought before. This is not the same thing as "original thoughts," or "profound thoughts," or "thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls"; only things I had not thought before. I shall try to put the few of them down here.

In ever so many ways—by its grammar and even its spelling, by its being read silently and alone, in a contemplative frame of mind—it is the nature of printed literature to confirm us in a number of related beliefs, which may or may not be delusions, concerning the way in which language mediates between a human being and the world. These beliefs, which Joyce, bless him, compels his reader to inspect, might be characterized in different ways by each of us, but I should name them as follows:

(1) That language is a mental phenomenon alone. (2) That literature belongs to and is done exclusively by "the still and mental parts." (3) That the shapes assigned to words by the dictionary and to sentences by the grammar correspond to things and their relations in reality. (4) So that process in reality has the nature of a sentence or a sequence of sentences. (5) And that time correspondingly unfolds itself in the grammatical order of a sequence of sentences. (6) That orderly narration faithfully represents how things happen. (7) That history, whether "real" or fictive, reveals its truth, if any, only to literary procedures that stress the representation of (*a*) abstraction, (*b*) chronological sequence, (*c*) causal sequence, and (*d*) identity of persons. (8) That the ideal for thought is to remain outside what it thinks about, and consequently to treat its subject matter as a concluded whole.

But in *Finnegans Wake* it is inescapable that language is a bodily thing, having to do somewhat intimately with thought, true, but always as thought by or through the medium of a bodily instrument that is spitting, sputtering, coughing, sneezing, braying, howling, chuckling, clearing itself, and saying "um" between words. It is salutary, if humbling, to be made to consider how very many things we do with the voice other than, as we proudly say, "make sense." In this connection I note that Joyce's distortion of words is not always meant to secure a multiplicity of meanings; not infrequently it seems to reach out deliberately for the subhuman, and for the dissolution of meaning entirely for a moment (when I suggested earlier that the method might be easy to adapt for other writers I didn't mean this part of it).

Moreover, because all this is happening in a dream there is a further inference to be drawn from the emphasis on the bodily nature of language: whatever the overt subject, with all its ambiguities, may be, the language is liable to be thinking, or enacting, the body's sleep at the same time—the sweatings, the pricklings, the rumbling in the bowels; and some of the most genial comedy of the book comes, too, from the circumstance that at all times the most learned language is but a step from a fart or a snore.

Now I may not think that this circumstance is always a blessing. And on the whole I am just as pleased that Joyce's method has not been widely adapted by novelists, for instance, or by students writing term papers. Not only is it all too easy these days to blacken the character of "the still and mental parts"; there's also this, that when the Joycean language fails of genius, and it does even in the hands of genius—when it fails to be genial, it hits the abyss without interval; there's no middle way.

Still, I shall go on, though maybe only a little at a time. What a marvelous book! I even want to find out what happens over again next. And there's a wondrous helpful thing about reading a book you know you don't understand; it may teach you something about all those other books you thought you did.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Black Is Computable

The Controversy over *Time on the Cross* and the History of American Slavery

HARRY N. SCHEIBER

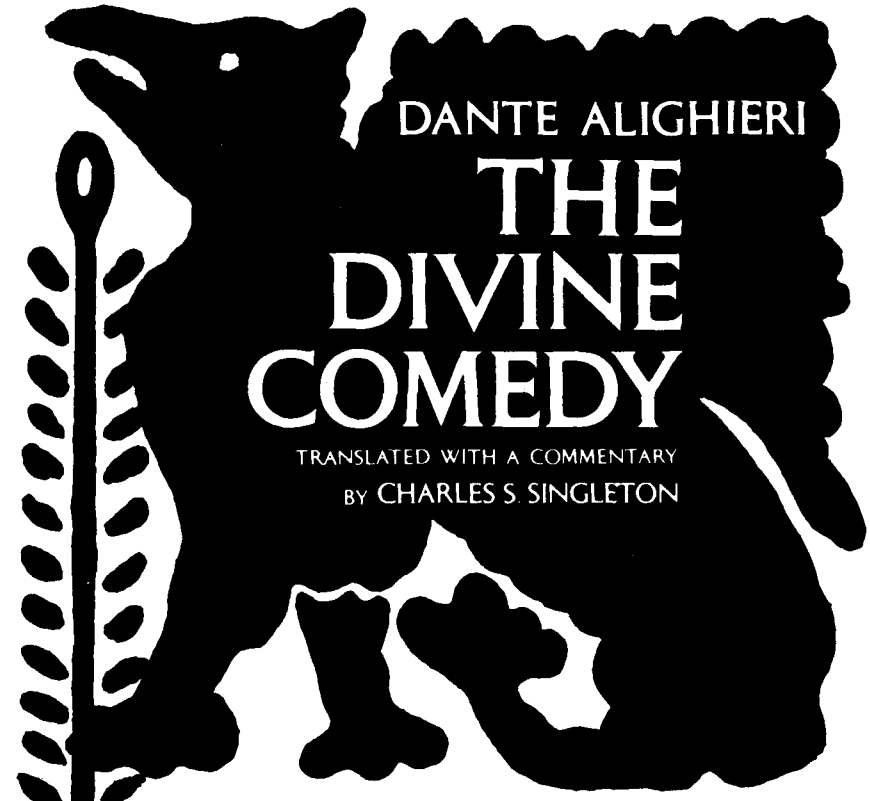
Since its publication last year, *Time on the Cross*, a two-volume revisionist study of black slavery in the antebellum South, has received commercial promotion and critical attention of a sort usually enjoyed only by major novels and book-club best sellers. The book and its authors—economic historians Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman—have been given prominent reviews or news stories by every major journal of opinion, by *Time* and *Newsweek*, and on television talk shows. The book's recent winning of the Bancroft Prize in History (despite an extraordinary accompanying statement by the trustees of their reservations about the prize committee's decision) crowned a popular success that is probably unprecedented for a serious work in the field of American economic history. All this is no doubt familiar to readers of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

Probably less well known, as yet, is the fact that *Time on the Cross* bids fair to achieve the dubious distinction of becoming an instant scholarly artifact—a work whose major premises, substantive historical arguments, and methodological claims have by now been nearly demolished. Given the critical acclaim that this book won on its appearance in the spring of 1974, it is important to inquire why the critical pendulum has swung so swiftly the other way, as well as why the initial reaction was so favorable. No less intriguing is the question of whether there remains any enduring value in Fogel and Engerman's historical model of slavery—which was designed, they claim, to "reveal not only to blacks but to whites as well, that part of American history which has been kept from them—the record of black achievement under adversity."

Several features of the book, especially the rhetorical style with which Fogel and Engerman present their arguments in volume 1 (the text volume, supplemented by a companion volume 2, which presents underlying documentation and procedures), were well calculated to attract attention. First, there is their claim to novelty of interpretation. They consistently attack "the traditional view" of antebellum slavery—"a broad consensus . . . accepted by most readers of this book [*sic*]"—that allegedly portrays the slavery system as inefficient, the slave worker as lazy and inept, the slave family as unstable, the slave trade as disruptive of black family stability, and the planters' expropriation of the value of slaves' labor as high. Also part of this "consensus" is the view that slavery was losing economic viability in the 1850s and the contention that

HARRY N. SCHEIBER is professor of history at the University of California, San Diego, and currently president of the Council on Research in Economic History. Among his writings are *Ohio Canal Era: A Case Study of Government and the Economy* and, with co-authors Harold Vatter and the late H. U. Faulkner, *American Economic History*, forthcoming in 1976.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"A monument to American scholarship . . . . unlikely to be outdated in our century."—Robert J. Clements, *Saturday Review*

"Singleton's reading of the *Divine Comedy* . . . is now our main thoroughfare to the great poem."—D. S. Carne-Ross, *New York Review of Books*

"The most complete, almost awesomely erudite commentary available anywhere in the English language and, I suspect, in any language."—Doris Grumbach, *The New Republic*

"Indispensable for all lovers of this masterpiece who wish to root it in its linguistic, historic, and social reality."—Morton W. Bloomfield, *Speculum*

Now complete with the publication of *Paradiso*, Charles S. Singleton's masterful edition of the *Divine Comedy* will be invaluable to all English-speaking readers of Dante. Text and translation are reproduced in a separate volume for each cantica, and each is accompanied by a volume of intensive commentary, making six volumes in all.

Bollingen Series LXXX

Six-volume set price, $80.00 • Each two-volume part, $30.00

Write for a brochure on the *Divine Comedy*

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

Princeton, New Jersey 08540

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the southern planters needed new territory into which to expand lest the whole slavery system collapse.

Second, Fogel and Engerman take great pains to shroud their work in the majesty of technocratic inscrutability. Thus they condescendingly observe that previous studies of slavery were written mainly by historians "generally too inexperienced in economics and demography to recognize the value of these data and too inexperienced in statistical methods to be able to exploit them." Some of their own "most telling revisions," they warn us, "turn on technical mathematical points." *Time on the Cross* bases its interpretations upon such bodies of evidence as "21,118 farms in 102 randomly selected townships"; upon probate records concerning "approximately 80,000 slaves from 54 counties in 8 southern states," and the like. In sum, we are given to understand that the data are more accurate, more complete, more representative, and in all imaginable ways more reliable than any hitherto used by historians of slavery. Moreover, the text volume—entirely lacking in documentation (which is set aside for volume 2)—pretends to offer not only Fogel and Engerman's own research contributions, but a summary view, or synthesis, of studies in the "new economic history" (also termed Cliometrics) that have been undertaken by scores of scholars for the past fifteen years. The authors of these studies are "historians and economists who are trained in the application of quantitative methods to historical problems," and they have been using "high-speed computers" to organize great masses of data "long locked in obscure archives."

The message is clear enough: any critic of *Time on the Cross* is warned that he or she is taking on a whole generation of new technocrats. Seldom do Fogel and Engerman offer the reader even a hint that their interpretations are likely to create enormous areas of disagreement, even among the new economic historians they present as contributors to a monolithic Cliometrics. The impression of unanimity is reinforced by their acknowledgments, thanking about a hundred scholars for reading and checking the book's manuscript in whole or in part. Even in volume 1, as C. Vann Woodward has written in the *New York Review of Books* (May 2, 1974), "the rattle of electronic equipment is heard off stage, and the reader is coerced by references to 'vast research effort involving thousands of man and computer hours' and inconceivable mountains of statistical data."

Third, *Time on the Cross* commanded attention because of Fogel and Engerman's portrayal of slavery as essentially a benign system. Doubtless they would protest this reading of their book: several times in the text they warn that they do not deny the immorality of slavery or seek somehow to "resurrect" it. But such interjections do not and cannot overbalance the impact of their principal contentions concerning antebellum slavery in the South. Among them are the following:

1. Masters actually "expropriated" only a small proportion (about 12 percent) of the incomes that their slaves' labor produced.

2. The diets, housing, and clothing given slaves were adequate or better than adequate—comparing favorably with those of contemporary industrial workers in the North.

3. Black family structure under slavery was "stable," Fogel and Engerman contend, because it was in the masters' interest to keep it so. Besides (they assert, entirely without documentation), "Victorian attitudes predominated in the planting class," and the encouragement of family stability, and "the limitation of sexual activity to the family, followed naturally from such attitudes." Allegedly hard data on marriage patterns and the timing of births to black women are offered in further support of this view.

4. The interstate slave trade, for all the suffering it may have inflicted on individuals, did not break up many slave families. Fogel and Engerman's computations (the validity of which is considered below) indicate that 13 percent or less of interstate slave sales "resulted in the destruction of marriages."

5. The sexual exploitation of black women by slaveowners was not of great significance. For this, the authors cite again "Victorian attitudes," but also refer to an allegedly low rate of mulatto births. A further, incredibly fragile line of logical inferences brings out the fact that in Nashville—the only southern city for which such data exist—only 4.3 percent of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New from Columbia

RAVEL: Man and Musician
ARBIE ORENSTEIN

Incorporating a great deal of fresh source material uncovered in southern France, Arbie Orenstein, in his brilliant centenary biography, looks at Ravel, the man and the composer. The author discusses the composer's musical aesthetics and provides an analysis of all his compositions and an evaluation of his achievement. A catalogue of works and a valuable discography are included. $10.95

RACE, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY
UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Based on the findings of anthropologists, sociologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, historians, and geneticists—this book attempts to combat racial misconceptions, false theories, and prejudices by subjecting them to the scrutiny of scientific investigation. A revised and enlarged edition of **Race and Society.** $12.00, cloth; $4.95, paper

THE WASHINGTON EMBRACE OF BUSINESS
ROGER M. BLOUGH

In this book, the former chairman of the Board of Directors and chief executive officer of the United States Steel Corporation calls upon business to abandon its hopes for less federal regulation, demonstrates how the moment's good politics may have disastrous economic side effects, and proposes the establishment of a "Hoover Commission" to examine Congress's attempts at business management. **Benjamin F. Fairless Lectures: Carnegie-Mellon University** $8.95

THE PAPERS OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON
VOLUME XXII: JULY 11, 1798-MARCH 31, 1799
HAROLD C. SYRETT, Editor

This volume deals in large part with Hamilton's role as Inspector General of the army authorized by Congress to be raised in anticipation of a possible war with France. Much of the correspondence concerns the dispute over the rank of the three major generals, Hamilton, Henry Knox, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, as well as the recruiting, supplying, and organizing of the troops. $17.50

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

Address for orders: 136 South Broadway, Irvington, New York 10533

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prostitutes were black, and none were slaves. These data, which include elements that have since been shown by Herbert Gutman to be wholly false or imagined, are complemented with a flat assertion that white planters' racism probably militated against their desiring sexual relations with black women!

6. Despite admittedly important barriers to social or occupational mobility for blacks, fully one-fourth of the slaves in 1860 were in occupations of higher status than that of field hands.

7. Even the whipping of slaves has to be viewed in perspective. Fogel and Engerman offer data from one Louisiana plantation for the years 1840–42 (complete with a bar graph showing "Whippings per Hand") revealing an average of only 0.7 whippings per slave per annum. Again we are given a comparison with the contemporary society of the North: the whipping of slaves was the rational alternative (in economic terms) to incarceration or arbitrary discharge of industrial workers by northern employers.

Although individuals obviously deviated from the norm, the planters as a class must be understood as "shrewd, capitalistic businessmen" who sought from their slaves "not 'perfect' submission but 'optimal' submission." Fogel and Engerman conclude that the planters "generally used force for exactly the same purpose as they used positive incentives—to achieve the largest product at the lowest cost. Like everything else [?], they strove to use force not cruelly, but optimally." Hence previous writers on slavery, such as the historian Kenneth Stampp, author of the classic study *The Peculiar Institution,* "overestimated the cruelty of the slave system."

Lest the point be lost (which is inconceivable), Fogel and Engerman also argue at length that their work has "implications for our time." For they seek to "expose many myths that have served to corrode and poison relations between the races, but also help to put into a new perspective some of the most urgent issues of our day." The first lesson for our time is that—in light of what they have presented as the blacks' true condition under slavery—America's black community fared worse in material terms after emancipation than before. This contention is undocumented, even in the second volume, but we are assured that the Cliometricians are working on it and, though still tentative, "the evidence . . . is beginning to accumulate."

The second lesson does not await further research for evaluation or validation. It is a dual one: that many scholars who have portrayed the black slave sympathetically are guilty of subtle racism, and that this racism has had important social consequences. Indeed, Fogel and Engerman aver that, by viewing the black as somehow incapacitated by slavery, critics of slavery, like the abolitionists, have probably done "as much as any other group, perhaps more, to fasten the spikes that have kept blacks in the agony of racial discrimination during their century of freedom."

This last idea will be either gratifying or infuriating, it is hard to know which, to the ghosts of the white-hooded Klansmen, the Negro-baiting demagogues of the South, the slum landlords of the North, and the countless juries that have let lynchers of black men go free. But the message does suggest that there may be something terribly amiss with *Time on the Cross.* The informed reader who has not already become skeptical of a book that views 0.7 whippings per hand per annum as evidence of relatively benign treatment, or who has not been put off by undocumented assertions about "Victorian attitudes" of planters, will surely be given pause by the attack on Kenneth Stampp's *Peculiar Institution.* This book is attacked not only for alleged careless and "impressionistic" methodology, but also for its failure "to effect a fundamental break with racist depictions of the antebellum Negro." As Naomi Bliven wrote of Fogel and Engerman's statistical constructs in her *New Yorker* review (September 30, 1974), "You look at the models and read the statistics, and then you remember that people are not really like that." Similarly, you look at what these two professed "scientific" historians say of Kenneth Stampp, and you remember that his book was not really like that.

Some of the earliest reviewers of *Time on the Cross*—whose reviews put this book on the in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OHIO UNIVERSITY PRESS

Athens, Ohio 45701

EXISTENTIAL BATTLES: THE GROWTH OF NORMAN MAILER
Laura Adams
Adams sees Mailer's work including his non-literary performances, as a progressive whole. November, 220 pp. $10.00.

WESTERN APPROACHES TO EASTERN PHILOSOPHY
Troy Wilson Organ
These essays argue that the decline of the west is no longer a theory but a reality, and that remedies from within the west itself have proved to be virtually worthless. December, 275 pp. $12.00.

THE VICTORIAN EXPERIENCE: THE NOVELISTS
Edited by *Richard Levine*
The contributors discuss the novelists in terms of responses developed through years of study. December, 290 pp. $12.00.

New Poetry
STRETCHING FENCE
Sonya Dorman
A new collection by the poet whose first book was a National Council of the Arts selection in 1969. November, 61 pp. $6.00 Cl $3.00 Pa

THE SATIRES OF LUDOVICO ARIOSTO: A RENAISSANCE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Translated, with an introduction, by *Peter DeSa Wiggins*
This is the first edition in English with the standard text of the original on facing pages. February 1976, 210 pp. $9.00

COUNTRY OF RESEMBLANCES
Beth Bentley
The locus of reality is the imagination; the outer world is only a reflection of inner mystery. November, 72 pp. $6.75 Cl $3.75 Pa

INSCRIPTS
Samuel Hazo
The author immerses himself in the lives of three 20th century individuals whose dilemmas have epic resonances. September, 145 pp. $8.00 Cl $3.75 Pa

ISABEL FRAIRE: POEMS
Translated by *Thomas Hoeksema*
Rooted in Mexico's great poetry of solitude, her unique consciousness extends the new directions in contemporary Latin American poetry. August, 104 pp. $7.00 Pa only.

MORTAL FIRE
Peter Dale
This is a new collection of poems by the well-known British poet. September, 150 pp. $7.50 Cl $3.50 Pa

FRONTIER MUSICIANS ON THE CONNOQUENESSING, WABASH AND OHIO: A HISTORY OF THE MUSIC AND MUSICIANS OF GEORGE RAPP'S HARMONY SOCIETY (1805-1906)
Richard D. Wetzel
Provides informative and interesting reading for those who enjoy zesty Americana. April 1976, 328 pp. $13.50.

Fall 1975

FROM CULTURAL REBELLION TO COUNTERREVOLUTION: THE POLITICS OF MAURICE BARRÈS
C. Stewart Doty
Doty adds to our knowledge of French nationalism and provides original discussion of Barrès' novels. December, 300 pp. $12.00.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE GERMAN 1848 REVOLUTION
Rudolph Stadelmann
Translated by *James G. Chastain*
Hailed as a decisive step toward a new interpretation. September, 240 pp. $11.00.

THE DISSENTING TRADITION: ESSAYS FOR LELAND H. CARLSON
Edited by *C. Robert Cole* and *Michael E. Moody*
Originally a theory of religious organization, dissent, by the late 19th century, became a theory of political, social or intellectual resistance. November, 300 pp. $12.00.

AMERICAN DEFENSE POLICY FROM EISENHOWER TO KENNEDY: THE POLITICS OF CHANGING MILITARY REQUIREMENTS, 1957-1961
Richard A. Aliano
September, 350 pp. $13.50.

LITERATURE AND IDEAS IN AMERICA: ESSAYS IN MEMORY OF HARRY HAYDEN CLARK
Edited by *Robert Falk*
These essays explore the relations between American letters and the history of ideas. September, 255 pp. $10.00.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tellectual map—did point out a few obvious errors of judgment or lack of fairness in characterizing historians such as Stampp. But for the most part, these reviews failed wholly to confront the evidence in *Time on the Cross*. In his long, ten-column essay in the *New York Review*, C. Vann Woodward of Yale University devoted nearly all his space to a straightforward, largely uncritical summarizing of Fogel and Engerman's main theses. In perhaps two column inches at the end of his review, Woodward did venture an exhortation, calling upon "the best qualified experts, traditional as well as scientific, especially those who speak their own language," to give close appraisal to the authors' findings, methods, and data. "The Cliometricians," Woodward declared, "are vulnerable at many points and their conclusions provoke valid doubts." But the principal message of his cautious review—apart from pointing out that few historians actually subscribe to all, or even most, elements of what Fogel and Engerman attack as "the traditional interpretation"—was that Cliometrics confronts historians "with equations they cannot read, with techniques they cannot understand, [and] with copious data beyond their comprehension." In sum, Woodward seems to have signaled that even the *doyen* of southern history did not have the information or skills to deal systematically with—or at best was not inclined to challenge—the evidence and procedures in *Time on the Cross*. Nor did Woodward, in deserting the field and leaving it exclusively to the technicians, inform his readership that within the discipline of economic history there was abundant controversy over the validity of some of Fogel's own most important previous work. (Notable, for example, were some half-dozen published analyses of his 1965 book on the impact of the railroad in United States economic growth—many of which had subjected both the method and the conclusions to devastating criticism, and to none of which Fogel had ever rejoined, as customary academic norms required.) Instead, Woodward himself slipped into using a rhetorical device of Fogel and Engerman in their book, freely interchanging the two authors with a monolithic image of "the Cliometricians" and what they had found and thought. Thus he stated that "the Cliometricians [not Fogel and Engerman] find that 84 percent of the slaves in the westward movement migrated with their owners." Moreover, he even accepted and adopted the rhetoric that posited a difference between "traditional" and "scientific" methods, effectively conceding a monopoly on the latter to "the Cliometricians."

The *New York Times Book Review* (April 28, 1974) assigned its review to an economist whose arrogant assertions of the superiority of Cliometrics to traditional history exceeded even those of Fogel and Engerman. The reviewer, Peter Passell of Columbia, accepted the book wholesale and failed to convey even a hint of the fact that *Time on the Cross* included many tentative conjectures and fragmentary findings. He did, however, offer the condescending prediction that "feign[ed] moral outrage" would pour forth from unscientific, fuzzy-minded traditional historians. Curiously, while contending that "just what [traditional historians] will find to attack is unclear," Passell did concede that "the major findings . . . may be vulnerable to technical criticism."

Much the same tone characterized the *London Times Literary Supplement* review (May 31, 1974), although at least it informed readers that some of the book's findings are only "preliminary." The eminent social historian David Rothman, in the *New Leader* (May 27, 1974), identified some obvious fallacies in Fogel and Engerman's reasoning—especially their technique of making glib comparisons as a way of placing slavery "in perspective." Yet he characterized the book as "a marvelously innovative achievement, with revolutionary implications for the subject it analyzes and for the discipline of history." Nathan Glazer, in *Commentary* (August 1974), raised a set of serious questions about the policy implications of the benign view of black slavery; but he set forth in summary form, unchallenged, all the book's principal substantive theses.

Meanwhile news about the book was penetrating the mass media. *Time*, in its June 17, 1974, issue, declared that *Time on the Cross* had "more or less proved that traditional 'impressionistic' historians persistently wrote

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Researches on the United States

By Philip Mazzei.
Translated by Constance D. Sherman. 500 pp. (approx.), frontis., index. (Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation) **$25.00**

Researches on the United States was the first accurate account of the American colonies to be published in French. The author, Philip Mazzei, was an Italian physician, businessman, horticulturist, philosopher, diplomat, and a friend of Jefferson for forty years. He was an eighteenth-century man of the world, whose accounts of America are made especially vivid by comparisons with European societies. He repeatedly reveals himself as a champion of liberty, a man deeply imbued with the spirit of democracy and the conviction that the democratic ideal will triumph in the United States.

Tradition and the Founding Fathers

By Louis B. Wright. xvi, 151 pp. (Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation) **$7.50**

This is a collection of often humorous anecdotes and sometimes coruscating reflections that bring past values to the attention of the present. Its cornerstone is the success of early Americans in hammering a viable instrument of government out of an era of crisis, confusion, and chaos. Louis B. Wright's opening assertion, that education requires "the mastery of certain well-known bodies of traditional knowledge," is supported by bringing a fine sense of history and literature to his wide range of topics.

The Living Alphabet

By Warren Chappell. 64 pp. (approx.), illus. **$10.00**

Written, designed, and illustrated by Warren Chappell, this handsome volume is a concise recapitulation of the nature of letter forms and their survival over the past 1,200 years. Addressing himself to concepts rather than models, Chappell captures the spirit of carved, written, and printed words with the simplicity and clarity of a master artisan. His primary discussion focuses on the philosophical and aesthetic properties of the alphabet. This is beautifully documented by the author's own typography and design, which features many illustrations.

University Press of Virginia
Box 3608 University Station
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about American slavery in delusive and polemical stereotypes." Historians lacking the tools of quantification and statistical theory "could grope for another hundred years in subjective confusion and never be able even to evaluate or rebut the work of the cliometricians," the *Time* writer averred. This judgment, which of course reflected exactly the tone and position of Fogel and Engerman, was checked with "a dozen American scholars, many of whom had read the book in advance of publication." Although some of those polled did express reservations, "most were considerably impressed." Similarly, but a month earlier, *Newsweek*'s reviewer, Peter S. Prescott, hailed Cliometrics as "the most significant development in historical method over the last fifteen years," and predicted a debate "for years to come" on the issues that the book introduced.

By the summer of 1974, however, *Time on the Cross* was beginning to receive rougher treatment from reviewers and critics. In a brilliantly perceptive essay-review on historical literature regarding slavery, published in the spring number of *Daedalus,* David Brion Davis opened up one line of criticism that others would later explore more fully. The startling substantive theses of the book, Davis argued, were couched in sensational and aggressive rhetoric that belied the authors' claim to exceptional "objectivity." The specific contentions that underlay the benign view of slavery were improperly "grouped as a series of revelations"; they failed to carry any "sense of human meaning and of the individual personalities involved"; they ought to have "referred to specific situations and environments instead of to vague statistical aggregates"; and they were unnecessarily freighted with the "antiracist protestations" that we have already noted. Other critics took up these themes. In the August 1974 *Commonweal* Nathan Huggins, a specialist in black history, accepted uncritically many of the substantive theses of *Time on the Cross* so far as they concerned the economics of slavery; and he welcomed the book's rejection of the "Sambo image" of slaves and their culture. But he too observed that "the traditional interpretation" as defined by Fogel and Engerman was a straw man (what another critic, William Parker, has termed a "manufactured adversary"). Fogel and Engerman's data, Huggins wrote, were drawn too heavily from the large, nineteenth-century plantations. "Their results are averages, trends, and profiles. Historical significance is sometimes lost sight of." In Huggins's view, moreover, many of the conclusions "boggle the mind and make one feel victim of bookkeeping legerdemain."

How much "bookkeeping legerdemain" actually lay embedded (or perhaps obscured) in the arcane statistical computations presented in volume 2 was a question soon explored more thoroughly. For by mid-1974, reviewers who themselves had written scholarly works on antebellum slavery—including many who were among that band of "Cliometricians" so prominently featured as a monolithic school in *Time on the Cross*—were subjecting the book to closer scrutiny. And as they did so, both the extravagant pretensions and the more novel substantive theses of *Time on the Cross* came to be seen in a different light altogether. Most important, the protective screening of technocratic inscrutability—the impression conveyed by Fogel and Engerman, and all too quickly accepted by Woodward and other early reviewers, that Cliometricians were understandable only to other Cliometricians—was stripped away, taking with it the carefully constructed image of "scientific history."

The work of serious criticism on these lines began with an incisive review in the *Atlantic* (August 1974) by John W. Blassingame, who two years earlier had written *The Slave Community,* a major study of slave culture in the South. Blassingame masterfully isolated some of the crucial flaws—of logic, of evidence, and of statistical theory—that inhere in the book. First, he noted forcefully that the authors "frequently distort the arguments of their opponents," and are often "unbelievably careless" in presenting the ideas and data of other scholars. Second, he disposed of the notion that Cliometrics had carried the field triumphantly in the discipline of economic history. Perhaps too strongly, but not without some truth, Blassingame stated that one element of Cliometric method—"counterfactual history,"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in which historical models are built to describe long-term change as it might have happened without one or another factor that in fact *did* operate—was "an anachronistic and thoroughly discredited form of historical inquiry." Third, he exposed the logical fallacy of arguing that slaves were rarely whipped because one plantation's records so indicated; or that "sexual exploitation" of black women was infrequent because birthrates of mulattoes were low; or that a 12 percent differential between white and black life-expectancy rates could reasonably be set aside in arguing from other evidence that slaves were well nourished, housed, clothed, and provided with medical care. Blassingame's review was not entirely free of statistical error itself (especially as he exaggerated the degree of error in the Fogel-Engerman calculations of broken families in the slave trade). But at least it came to grips directly with the evidence and it deflated *Time on the Cross* as a work firmly grounded on "scientific" method elegantly executed.

Further new criticism made it evident that *Time on the Cross* did not, as its authors seem to have assumed, speak for the quantitative economic historians, or Cliometricians. Indeed, that some deadly serious "bookkeeping legerdemain" might be at issue was suggested by Richard Sutch's analysis of the book, presented at a special conference on *Time on the Cross* sponsored by the Social Science Research Council at Rochester in the fall of 1974. Sutch's long critique (as yet unpublished, but scheduled to appear in a book of essays on Fogel and Engerman's study) attacked the validity of the contentions concerning slave diets and nutrition; the allegedly large proportion of slaves in skilled occupations; and the degree to which the slave trade allegedly affected family stability. The conference discussion evoked from Fogel the assertion that he and his co-author "consider the single most important contribution of *Time on the Cross* to be the discovery of the relative efficiency of slave agriculture." To criticism of the book's effectively portraying hard work under coercive conditions and alleged acquiescence as virtues, Horatio Alger–style, Fogel replied that he and Engerman had not intended "to assign blacks a 'culture

The Use & Abuse of History

From the myths of the Greeks to Lévi-Strauss, the past alive and the present illumined

by M. I. Finley

"There will be few readers, including other scholars, who will not be able to learn from M. I. Finley—about our own as well as the ancient world—and gain enormous pleasure in the process."—*The London Times Literary Supplement*

"Compiled for the benefit of the reader who finds pleasure in coping with provocative ideas and interpretations concerning a wide range of subjects....[The essays] enlighten and inform."
—*Library Journal*

$10.00

THE VIKING PRESS
625 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that was a carbon copy of white culture.' "

In the next few months, expert criticism came to focus on both the evidence of the slaves' social situation and the evidence of economic efficiency. Writing in *Agricultural History* (October 1974), Roger Ransom, an economist who has collaborated with Sutch on studies of the nineteenth-century South, and like Sutch a fully credentialed Cliometrician, found that for several of the main propositions in *Time on the Cross,* the authors' "arguments are based on inadequate data, and their reasoning from statistical evidence seems faulty at many points." Of the crucial calculation of "actual" expropriation of slaves' labor by masters, Ransom stated that "no economist would argue" in the manner that Fogel and Engerman did: "It is not a question of whether their estimate is high or low: the calculation is simply absurd." He characterized the technical appendix and documentation in volume 2 as "an incredibly complex entanglement of convoluted arguments, unnecessarily expanded and complex equations, and unusually subtle assumptions."

The whole web of data, arguments, mathematics, and assumptions was subjected to devastating and, I think, definitive refutation in two recent major critiques. The first is a 175-page review of *Time on the Cross* by the social historian Herbert Gutmann, published in the January 1975 *Journal of Negro History.* The second is a lengthy and detailed reexamination of Fogel and Engerman's theses concerning the character and efficiency of slavery as a labor system. Written by two major figures in the development of quantitative economic history, or Cliometrics—Paul David of Stanford and Peter Temin of MIT—the review appeared in the *Journal of Economic History* for September 1974. Both studies expose astonishing inadequacies of evidence or insupportable uses of evidence at many points in *Time on the Cross.* Both studies comment on a series of extraordinary divergences between strongly asserted interpretive statements in the text volume on the one hand, and, on the other, extremely tentative statements or fragmentary evidence (at best) on the same themes in volume 2. On the basis of extensive research underlying his own soon-to-be-published book on the slave family, and a close reappraisal of Fogel and Engerman's data, Gutman offers the following judgment of the merits of *Time on the Cross:*

> Whatever its importance as economic history, detailed examination of *Time on the Cross*—its major arguments and the evidence supporting them—shows convincingly that it is poor social history, that its analysis of the beliefs and behavior of "ordinary" enslaved Afro-Americans is entirely misleading, that it uses a thoroughly inadequate "model" of slave socialization, and that it contains frequent and important errors of all kinds. . . . *Time on the Cross* cannot be taken seriously as social history. . . .
>
> . . . [I]t is a book filled with egregious errors meant to measure "black achievement under adversity." It really tells us nothing of importance about the beliefs and behavior of enslaved Afro-Americans.

Similarly, on *Time on the Cross* as it presents the economic side of slavery, David and Temin conclude that "the description of the comparative material conditions of American Negro slavery . . . contains a preponderance of errors that run in one direction, imparting an upward bias of undetermined magnitude. In the instance of the rate of exploitation or expropriation [a crucial point], the distortion has been seen to be so large as to negate the usefulness of Fogel and Engerman's published 'findings.' " No less unsatisfactory are the book's arguments on the relative efficiency of slavery. David and Temin find persistent bias and distortion in the assumptions and uses of evidence. Finally, these two critics come back to the point made by David Brion Davis long before: that "economic theory is . . . well set up to guide us in making coherent statements about the welfare efficiency of slavery from the standpoint of everyone but the slaves." Having failed to understand this—or, as Ransom had argued earlier, being imprisoned by their own methodology—Fogel and Engerman ended by writing an "arresting" but "misleading" book.

There is not enough space here to recapitulate all the refutations of Fogel and Engerman contained in the long critiques by Gutman and by David and Temin, or in an

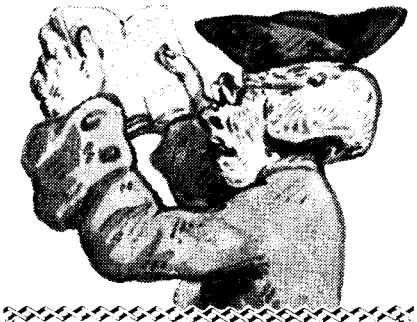
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

incisive essay-review by F. B. Tipton and C. E. Walker, scheduled to appear in *History and Theory*, as well as in other, briefer scholarly commentaries. But to provide at least a sense of where these imaginative and painstaking studies have left us (and left *Time on the Cross*), we may revert to the principal contentions of the book, underlying its benign view of slavery. We will examine them seriatim, as they have been discussed earlier in this article:

1. The rate of "expropriation"—the proportion of the value of a slave's labor taken by the master—is grossly underestimated at about 12 percent. In fact, this computation depends upon charging against the slaves the expenses of their upbringing as children (and also the expenses incurred by masters for slaves who did not survive childhood), discounted at a rate of 10 percent annually. The procedure is so heavily skewed to produce a low "expropriation" rate that if such discounting of childhood expenses is removed, the calculation would show that some 49 percent of the value of slaves' labor was taken from them! Moreover, this is a *lower-bound* estimate. For instead of estimating the expenses of childhood from actual data on nutrients consumed, Fogel and Engerman applied an estimate made in the 1880s by Munich nutritionists as to the calories required by children in general at specific ages! This point is made by David and Temin and is reinforced by a careful analysis of the "discounting" procedure and its pitfalls, in a review by Stephen DeCanio in *Reviews in American History* (December 1974).

2. Fogel and Engerman have consistently drawn their data on slave diets from a fragmentary source that probably gives a significant bias to their estimates. Although volume 1 purports to present data (including a chart on "Average Daily Food Consumption of Slaves in 1860") pertinent to southern slaves generally, their estimates are derived "from a sample of large slave plantations (over 50 slaves) . . . that were at least 50 wagon miles from a city." David and Temin and also Ransom indicate why it is risky at best to rely upon so untypical a sample of plantations; Ransom also challenges the assumption made by Fogel and Engerman that

Did you hear the one about Swinburne...



...in his cups, composing a ribald fantasy about Wordsworth and Queen Victoria? Or the one about Spenser, dispatching a witty quatrain as a discreet reminder, when he had failed to receive a promised gratuity from Queen Elizabeth. Or the one about Shaw dancing with a policeman around Fitzroy Square in the early hours of the morning.

Nearly 500 such tales—the familiar and the newly discovered, the amusing and the touching, the apocryphal and the revealing—fill this treasury of literary anecdotes. The ideal gift for any reader who enjoys a good story well told. $15.00

THE OXFORD BOOK OF LITERARY ANECDOTES

Edited by
JAMES SUTHERLAND

#4 on (London) Times bestseller list.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
200 Madison Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all available food after estimated consumption by resident whites was in fact fed to slaves. Moreover, David and Temin demonstrate how *Time on the Cross* compares the estimated slave diet in 1860 with that of the national population in 1879 (not 1860) on the basis of two other scholars' purely conjectural estimates of how large elements of the 1879 diet were actually allocated. Also, even the Fogel and Engerman estimates of slaves' caloric consumption may well indicate that slaves were "suffering from some measure of food energy deprivation."

3. Gutman's work on evidence of black family structure under slavery refutes or casts persuasive doubts, in all particulars, on the major contentions of Fogel and Engerman. The latter have made elementary errors of definition that skew their results (for example, confusing evidence on marriage breakups with evidence of the larger phenomenon of "family stability"); they offer no evidence whatever for alleged "Victorian attitudes" or blacks' "prudery"; and their style in presenting the meaning of their computed 8.6 percent of slave marriages "broken up by economic transactions" obscures the logical corollary that some 2.7 million men, women, and children were directly affected. Moreover, Fogel and Engerman ignore three studies that deal empirically with the problem of how estate inheritance and division affected slave families. Finally, as Blassingame also indicates in his *Atlantic* review, the Fogel-Engerman calculation of broken marriages is entirely inconsistent with hard evidence from registrations of blacks during the Civil War years—evidence that appears in one form in Blassingame's own 1972 book on slavery, showing that 1 out of 3 or 4 slave marriages (not 1 out of 11.6, as Fogel and Engerman argue) were forcibly broken by masters.

4. The evidentiary basis for Fogel and Engerman's analysis of the effects of interstate slave trade on family stability is wholly inadequate. Above all, it is marred by their dependence upon a sample (whose basis is unstated) of 5,000 slave sales in New Orleans —in which they interpret only the sale of a woman with children, and no other sales of females, as evidence of a broken family. This extraordinary procedure yields the low 13 percent estimate of interstate slave sales that broke up slave marriages. Gutman's study demolishes these calculations. Sutch's forthcoming critical analysis goes further still, discrediting the procedures by which Fogel and Engerman project data from William Calderhead's study of slave sales in Maryland, during the decade from 1830 to 1840, to the slave trade generally for the entire antebellum period. To this we may add that *Time on the Cross* neglects altogether the probable impact on slave families of planters' migrations with their respective slave forces. Not only could this process have broken up many families, but migration in this manner, outside the marketing mechanism of the cash-sales trade, was probably an indispensable mode of evading constitutional prohibitions or slave-sales taxes in several of the southwestern states—a problem considered more than forty years ago by Charles Sydnor in his *Slavery in Mississippi*.

5. Gutman has also destroyed the logical structure and evidentiary basis of the Fogel-Engerman thesis regarding the relatively slight sexual exploitation of slave women. Numerous critics have shown what should have been obvious—that mulatto births are not a sufficient index of exploitation, even if it is defined narrowly as coerced sexual relations. Moreover, Fogel and Engerman make much of the fact revealed by Nashville data that the city's brothels employed no slave women. On this point, as Gutman demonstrates, *Time on the Cross* has manufactured a "non-fact." For the Nashville census on which the authors relied reported no occupations of any sort for slaves, male or female. As for the demographic assumptions and computations that Fogel and Engerman adduce in their book, another critic—Maris Vinovskis in the *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Winter 1975)—has pointed out that, on this and other points, they "do not discuss or even mention" some of the standard scholarship on slave fertility and demography generally.

6. The calculation that some 25 percent of slaves in the 1850s were in occupations more highly skilled than field hands is also subjected to a withering critique by Gutman. So

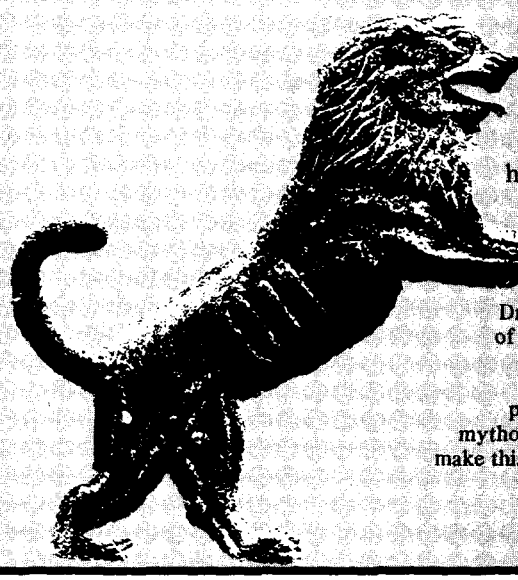
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

too is the conclusion drawn by Fogel and Engerman from their calculation—that the large number of skilled workers indicates significant opportunity and mobility within the legal boundaries of slave status. The sample on which Fogel and Engerman base their estimate of 25 percent skilled slave workers consists of data from only thirty-three plantations, a disturbingly slender basis for so sweeping a conclusion. Gutman cites not only the standard historical literature, but also the fact that of Kentucky slaves in the Union Army in 1865 (constituting half the adult male slave population of the state), over 97 percent were unskilled. Occupational data from the urban areas also cast serious doubt on the Fogel-Engerman thesis.

Indicative of how *Time on the Cross* too often presents data from other scholarly works is the authors' use of evidence drawn from Gerald Mullin's 1972 book on fugitive slaves in colonial Virginia, *Flight and Rebellion*. Mullin analyzed advertisements with regard to 1,138 runaway slaves, published in eighteenth-century newspapers. Not citing Mullin by name (consistent with their treatment of most scholars with whom they agree in the text volume of their book), Fogel and Engerman inform the reader of Mullin's finding that 22 percent of the runaways were artisans and craftsmen and another 7 percent were house servants. They offer this as corroborative evidence of occupational structure for the 1850s. What they neglect to say of the context of Mullin's analysis—quite apart from the validity of citing eighteenth-century data to make a point about mid-nineteenth-century occupations—has much to say about another of their hypotheses, the notion of "family stability" under slavery. For Mullin indicates that one-third of all runaways advertised for had escaped in order to rejoin their families! Moreover, if we applied the same logic to these data as Fogel and Engerman did to suggest the importance of the 22-percent-plus-7-percent skilled component, we could find corroborative evidence for a hypothesis that only 12.4 percent of blacks in the 1850s were female, for that is the proportion of the total number of runaways who were women.

7. The single plantation on whose data

HISTORY
Remembered, Recovered, Invented



Bernard Lewis

"Brilliant and stimulating. Bernard Lewis has sketched the map of a new and important cosmogony—that of the uses and abuses of history in the social process."
—*Eugene V. Rostow*

Drawing from his extensive knowledge of the history of the Middle East and Western world, Bernard Lewis considers the events from the past as they are recalled, rediscovered, and altered to fit modern purposes. Rich and colorful examples encompassing mythology, religious festivals, archaeology, and literature make this book a unique eagle's eye view of history. $6.95

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fogel and Engerman base their contention that whippings were infrequent actually recorded a higher "rate" of whippings than they computed. In addition, Gutman points out, examination of the original records of this plantation, as published in 1943, reveals numerous instances of collective whippings ("had a general Whipping frolick," et cetera), beatings of women, and very frequent whippings of the most productive workers in the slave force. Besides, as several critics have felt constrained to observe, the "profile" of whippings on one plantation is hardly a respectable basis for building generalizations about the degree and type of coercion that planters exercised over their slaves. In the face of the ubiquitous use of humiliating "light whipping" every day in the fields, as described in several dozen scholarly works on slavery, this use of only one piece of evidence is testimony to what above all is wrong with this book: its effective denial (despite the authors' interjected protestations to the contrary) of the human dimensions and psychological impact of coercive power enjoyed by masters over slaves. One does not have to buy the Sambo image, as was conjured up by Stanley Elkins in his *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life*—a work in its own way as divorced from the direct historical evidence of slavery as Fogel and Engerman's—to recognize how degrading such practices as whipping actually were. The discussion of whipping in *Time on the Cross* is only the grossest example of what economic historian William N. Parker has said of the book in *Reviews in American History* (December 1974): "It is an object lesson in what an economist can do with quantitative techniques and what he cannot do without a liberal exercise of sympathetic imagination." Even economists with an extraordinary faith in quantified data might have found the following, for instance, more persuasive on the subject of whipping and its social functions than the data from a single plantation. Of 558 fugitive slaves described in advertisements for runaways in a Mississippi newspaper during the years 1823 to 1848, Sydnor reports in *Slavery in Mississippi:*

> . . . 58 bore on their bodies permanent marks of punishment. Eleven had been branded, usually on the forehead, cheek, or breast. Forty-one had scars of whippings, some of them severe and not merely temporary marks. . . . One of the fugitives had an iron collar around his neck, and six of them had iron bands about their legs.

Nor do Fogel and Engerman's assertions about the comparative efficiency of slave and free labor stand up much better than the other elements in their benign view of slavery. Thus, David and Temin work painstakingly through the evidence and procedures to reveal the actual nature (and bias) of relevant estimates of comparative efficiency of northern and southern agriculture in 1860. They show that *Time on the Cross* loads the case in favor of high productivity for the South. First, Fogel and Engerman probably assumed erroneously that the workday of the free northern farmer was as long as the southern slave's. Moreover, they probably underestimated the intensity (in so-called "peak periods") of southern as opposed to northern farm labor. Second, they assumed that southern land was less fertile than northern, simply because the census-reported market value of southern land was 25.6 percent lower. In fact, market prices of land reflect the value of transport facilities and other amenities. In light of notorious North-South differences in this regard, a bias is introduced—overstating the relative efficiency of southern farm production—in treating land values as evidence of physical-output potential. Third, Fogel and Engerman's computation of farm output is based on prices received, or the market value of production. This is different from a physical measure of farm output, and it does not permit strict comparison of relative northern and southern production (or efficiency). Therefore, as David and Temin argue, the computations in *Time on the Cross* are concerned in the end with "the comparative 'revenue-getting efficiency' of the southern agricultural system"—something conceptually different from the comparative efficiency of free and slave labor. The same point was made by DeCanio in his review and by Thomas L. Haskell, who in a long note in the *New York Review* (September 19, 1974) indicated how the computational technique used by Fogel and Engerman could produce

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a finding that hand cultivation of opium by Turkish peasants would probably appear far more "efficient" than southern labor on cotton plantations.

Still another dubious feature of the efficiency argument in *Time on the Cross* is the authors' confusion of slave efficiency with the efficiency of the slave plantation system. The authors claim that Lewis C. Gray, almost alone among early twentieth-century historians of slavery, recognized that "in the production of staple commodities, the slave was clearly more efficient than the free laborer." But a careful reading of Gray (*Agriculture in the Southern United States*) reveals his actual argument: that it was the "appropriable surplus" of slaves—the ability of the master to take all that the slave produced in excess of his or her subsistence—"that gave slave labor under plantation organization an irresistible ability to displace free labor, whether hired or engaged in production on family-sized farms." Hence Fogel and Engerman flatly misrepresent Gray, and then proceed to use the misrepresentation as a foil with which to attack Kenneth Stampp for his view that "slaves were profitable not because they were more efficient than free labor but because their labor cost less"—which is precisely the position taken by Gray!

The scholarly debate will need to continue over the question of slavery's long-term impact on southern regional economic development. In essence, it is a matter of explaining the South's failure to develop. Although Fogel and Engerman do not come to grips with it, a central analytic problem is the need to explain why the South Atlantic states were left behind, in economic terms, when the cotton frontier shifted westward. The South Atlantic regional economy accomplished only partial and severely limited diversification; there was significant soil depletion (though *Time on the Cross* unconvincingly denies it); and, above all, there was the legacy of slavery: low literacy rates and a mass of workers without market buying power, the attitudinal and institutional rigidities associated with racism, the low level of public educational expenditures and other "infrastructural" enterprises, and the failure to attract foreign immigrants. One important

Silk Glove Hegemony

FINNISH-SOVIET RELATIONS, 1944-1974

A Case Study of the Theory of the Soft Sphere of Influence

John P. Vloyantes. This first book-length study in English of postwar relations between Russia and Finland tests the theory of the soft sphere of influence—that in which the dominant power is indirect, diluted, and disguised to permit a significant degree of independence. This book is not only important history of a little-noted area but a valuable contribution to theoretical studies of international relations. Its implications provide useful insights for our understanding of developments now facing us on the realigning international scene. *$10.00*

THE KENT STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS
KENT, OHIO 44242

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reason why Fogel and Engerman treat this core problem so unsatisfactorily is their neglect of some of the best-known and most valuable scholarly writings of the last twenty years. John Hebron Moore's excellent book on pre-1860 Mississippi agriculture, Willard Range's studies of Georgia agriculture and soil depletion, and Morton Rothstein's articles on the South as a "dual economy" and on marketing are all absent from the bibliography. Their findings, most of which militate against central arguments in *Time on the Cross*, are simply ignored. Similarly, Fogel and Engerman do not draw on Clement Eaton's important study of slave hiring, even though they complain that historians have given insufficient attention to that issue.

Especially gratuitous is the Fogel-Engerman complaint that Kenneth Stampp neglected the scholarly contributions of black historians, for a close reading of their own book will reveal few references to that literature. Indeed, in volume 1, neither black nor any other historians receive appropriate explicit mention. The worst example is in chapter 1, on the demography of the slave trade: although it is little more than a summary of Philip Curtin's work, Curtin's name never appears. Most undergraduate-student and lay readers probably will never see volume 2, yet only in its almost impenetrable confines could they learn how heavily Fogel and Engerman have used (well or badly) the work of William N. Parker, Robert Gallman, William Calderhead, Gavin Wright, James D. Foust, Roger Ransom, and Richard Sutch, as well as other scholars. Can one calculate an "expropriation rate" in such usage of others' scholarship?

Nor will they or any other reader learn from Fogel's recent retrospective view of *Time on the Cross*, in the *Times Literary Supplement* (June 13, 1975), that there has been significant postpublication scholarly criticism of the book. Scarcely a whisper of this harsh fact disturbs the rhapsodic ambience of that self-congratulatory piece.

If I am correct in contending that the verdict on *Time on the Cross* is now in, and that it is severely unfavorable, why was initial reaction so congratulatory? As I indicated earlier, probably the implicit and explicit claims of *Time on the Cross* that it was presenting a new consensus—the monolithic Cliometric view—disarmed criticism by many reviewers. Moreover, conventional academic practice, at least in America, operates in favor of the book. Historians and lay critics tend to look kindly upon a work of synthesis on a major theme in the nation's history, especially when written by two prolific and well-established academics holding important university posts. Then, too, simple *politesse* reinforces such tendencies; even some of the reviewers who put forward telling criticisms not only maintained civility themselves, despite the book's strident attacks on others, but urged patience upon others who might be critical. Further, the favorable reception was certainly due in part to Fogel and Engerman's critical posture vis-à-vis Stanley Elkins's *Slavery*, which argued condescendingly that blacks were not only inept but "infantilized" under slavery. That the Elkins view had already been subjected to powerful scholarly attack did not work against reviewers' welcoming yet another assault on it. Finally, Herbert Gutman has suggested that the "uncritical enthusiasm" that greeted *Time on the Cross* may have been motivated by an eagerness to accept the truth of Fogel and Engerman's assertion that "the great-grandfather of a ghetto Afro-American was neither an Uncle Tom nor a Nat Turner but a black Horatio Alger." Such a view of slavery, after all, can provide welcome relief from a large burden of white guilt, especially since the outpouring of writing on black history in the 1960s took so different a tack.

Whatever the explanation for uncritical enthusiasm, certainly the book's cause was not hurt by the fact that Fogel and Engerman heeded so well the message of Bishop Wilkins in his great work on *Mathematical Magick:* that "the ancient Philosophers esteemed it a great part of wisdome to conceale their learning from vulgar apprehension or use." Wilkins would have been amused, I think, to see volume 2 of *Time on the Cross*!

But precisely because both traditional and Cliometric historians have indeed been engaged for many years in a fruitful dialogue on the subject of southern slavery—exchanging

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their data generously, collaborating in accumulating additions to our knowledge both of relevant statistics and relevant institutional history—numerous highly informed specialist-practitioners stood ready to deal in depth with the evidence and procedures in *Time on the Cross*. Comparably bold and sweeping historical theses that had a wide impact in an earlier day, such as Charles Beard's 1913 view of the Constitution as an economic document or Frederick Jackson Turner's famous frontier hypothesis, stood for several decades before being subjected to analysis as searching as Fogel and Engerman's book has received in the last year. Once the specialist-practitioners began their task, the peculiar mathematical "magick" of *Time on the Cross* lost its spell. And so we have learned with astonishing swiftness how very limited is the extent to which black is computable.

The Terror After Death

TRUTH TO LIFE: The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century. *By A. O. J. Cockshut. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. $7.50.*

Reviewed by JUSTIN KAPLAN

Biography, Lytton Strachey said in 1918, "the most delicate and humane of all the branches of the art of writing, has been delegated to the journeymen of letters; we do not reflect that it is perhaps as difficult to write a good life as to live one." In general he deplored the work of his predecessors. "Those two fat volumes with which it is our custom to commemorate the dead—who does not know them, with their ill-digested masses of material, their slipshod style, their tone of tedious panegyric, their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment, of design? They are as familiar as the *cortège* of the undertaker, and wear the same air of slow, funereal barbarism." According to Strachey, nineteenth-

JUSTIN KAPLAN is the author of *Lincoln Steffens. A Biography*, published in 1974. His *Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain* received a Pulitzer Prize in Biography and a National Book Award in Arts and Letters. He is now writing a biography of Walt Whitman.

The Owl and the Nightingale

THE POEM AND ITS CRITICS
Kathryn Hume

Kathryn Hume assesses the validity and usefulness of various approaches to this controversial Middle English poem, and draws her own conclusions as to its nature. She shows saneness, balance, and humor, both in her criticisms and in her reinterpretation of the poem as a burlesque-satire on human contentiousness. $10.95

Some Facets of KING LEAR

ESSAYS IN PRISMATIC CRITICISM
Edited by Rosalie L. Colie and F.T. Flahiff

Like a prism, *King Lear* is attractive; like a prism, it is a multiply shaped thing; like a prism, it is an object of admiration, as well as an instrument of analysis. *Some Facets of King Lear* 'is an excellent book – in fact the best book of *Lear* criticism since J. Mack's *King Lear in Our Time*... Because the contributors know their trade and the play's always the thing, the overall accomplishment is considerable. Critically sophisticated ... a good introduction and excellent notes.' *Choice* $15.00, paper $4.50

The Collected Works of Erasmus

VOLUME 2 THE CORRESPONDENCE OF ERASMUS
LETTERS 142 TO 297 (1501-1514)

Erasmus was an indefatigable correspondent who regarded his letters as a form of literature and strove to make them models of elegant classical latinity. This volume contains what has survived of Erasmus' correspondence from a crucially important period in his career, during which he emerged from relative obscurity to become the acknowledged prince of Christian humanism. Like the first volume in the highly praised *Collected Works of Erasmus Series*, it will be 'Invaluable and necessary for research libraries in humanities.' *Choice* $25.00E

prices are those suggested at time of publication

University of Toronto Press
33 EAST TUPPER STREET,
BUFFALO, NY 14203

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

century biographers had added a new terror to death.

By an ironic turn of events, Strachey himself was to be the subject of a biography (by Michael Holroyd, published in 1967) which was bold and candid but also, contrary to Strachey's canons of taste, filled two large volumes and seemed oblivious to the principle of selection, leaving nothing out, not even the superfluous. As good as Holroyd's book was, Strachey still deserved to be treated in a more discriminating way. Now, by another ironic turn, the biographer of eminent Victorians and eminent critic of Victorian biography is not so much as mentioned in A. O. J. Cockshut's *Truth to Life. The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century,* makes it plain from the start that Cockshut takes issue with Strachey (and with popular opinion) on the accomplishment of some of those "journeymen of letters," the authors of standard biographies of famous achievers.

Just as fervently as Strachey, however, Cockshut argues that the writing of lives deserves to be considerably more than an act of historical piety compounded with what we loosely think of as scholarship or research. Cockshut's is a powerful argument. With all deference to Strachey, I do not think it has been made before with such intelligence and concision, with such a fabric of closely focused example, or with such a range of implication for contemporary writers, critics, and readers of biography.

Adopting Cockshut's point of view, we may well feel it useful to expand the term "literary biography" to include biographies which have literary qualities and not merely literary subjects. To state the broad principle in another way: Lives, as lived, are not works of art; but biographies, just as much as novels, plays, and poems, ought at least to aspire to some condition of art and to be discussed accordingly.

In *Truth to Life,* Cockshut examines the work of six English biographers: A. P. Stanley, classical scholar, ardent royalist, dean of Westminster, and author of a biography (1844) of Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby and father of Matthew Arnold; Samuel Smiles, who wrote *The Lives of the Engineers, Life of George Stephenson,* and other popular books about heroes of technological progress; George Otto Trevelyan, politician, country squire, and author of a life of his uncle, Lord Macaulay; James Anthony Froude, author of a two-part life of Thomas Carlyle and, in Cockshut's view, "the greatest of our biographers"; Viscount Morley, biographer of Oliver Cromwell (1900) and W. E. Gladstone (1903); and, at the end of the period, Wilfred Ward, author of a life (1912) of John Henry, Cardinal Newman.

Cockshut's study of these writers, their subjects, and their period is a remarkable essay in intellectual history. He renders the larger conflicts of Victoria's England as it sought to accommodate itself—in religion, politics, social structure, and manners—to liberalism and enlightenment, reform and reaction, science and scripture, progress and doubt. Cockshut reminds us that Victorian "propriety," a concept all too uncritically used in accounts of the period, has to be located within a historical pattern. He describes this pattern as "a parabola of prudence and restraint." At one end of the parabola was the Prince Regent; at the other, Sigmund Freud. This parabola reached its greatest distance from the candor locus between 1840 and 1875. Writing his biography of Lord Byron in 1829, Thomas Moore omitted certain topics chiefly out of respect for the privacy of people involved. But thirty years later, as Cockshut shows, it was the topics themselves—fornication, adultery, boozing, and so on—that had become unmentionable. "The moral welfare of the reading public was the issue rather than the personal dignity of individuals."

As a further complication, Cockshut says that in reading nineteenth-century biography one has to ask this question: "How much really is reticence, how much is concealment amounting to falsification, and how much is simple unawareness of what has been omitted?" He develops this point in his discussion of Froude. Froude worshipped Carlyle but did not minimize his rebarbative nature, his irritability, querulousness, and cosmic egotism. After all, Carlyle himself had told him to "keep back nothing and extenuate nothing." And so Froude could say of Carlyle:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"If his little finger ached he imagined that no mortal had ever suffered so before. If his liver was amiss he was a chained Prometheus with the vulture at his breast, and earth, sea, and sky were invoked to witness his injuries." Froude believed on good evidence that Carlyle's marriage to Jane Welsh was never consummated, but, despite his admirable forthrightness in most other respects, he seems to have deliberately chosen to lull rather than excite any suspicions that Carlyle was impotent. The biographical "blemish" here, Cockshut says, "is not the reticence itself, but the prevarication involved in pretending that reticence had not been required."

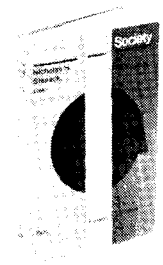
Ever since Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* and Boswell's *Johnson*, Cockshut says at the beginning of his study, "we have been living in a golden age of biography." (As contemporary exemplars he cites Richard Ellmann's *James Joyce* and Quentin Bell's *Virginia Woolf*.) Yet this golden age, two centuries old by now, has produced relatively little by way of critical discussion of biography as biography. Now, as earlier, it remains "a neglected form," and the vocabulary available to us for describing it is correspondingly meager. Cockshut's implicit attempt to develop a sort of poetics of biography may be the most significant aspect of his book. He has invaluable things to say about the goals, tensions, and strategies of biography and about the ways in which, when it works, it mediates between opposed forces—the writer and his subject, to begin with, and, beyond that, the respective claims of their vision, mind set, and reality.

"The main lines of interpretation are never obscured by the rush of facts," Cockshut says about Froude's Carlyle, "but exceptional and surprising facts are never suppressed or misrepresented because they might blur the picture's clear outline." This is the sort of standard that could be beneficially applied, say, to Carlos Baker's *Hemingway* or Joseph Blotner's *Faulkner*, both of them monolithic works that are not biographies so much as they are collections of material for the writing of future biographies. Cockshut shows how it is possible for the thousand tyrannical circumstances of biography—birth and death, education, belief, relationship, ambition, conflict, milieu, work—to become malleable and

Nicholas H. Steneck, Editor

SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

Past, Present, and Future



The distinguished contributors, representing the humanities as well as the social and physical sciences, join here in an innovative interdisciplinary discussion about man's courtship of, marriage to, and possible separation from the scientific way of life.

$15.00

The University of Michigan Press
615 East University Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

Please send me copy(ies) of *Science and Society*, @ $15.00 per copy. Payment is enclosed.

Name

Address

City/State Zip

Include 4% sales tax with all orders to be shipped to a Michigan address. 064

Read and discuss . . . . . .

Death in America
Edited by David Stannard
Examines a variety of beliefs and practices from the past to restore the historical dimension to contemporary American attitudes toward death.
$10.00 Cloth **$3.95 Paper**

Vigilante Politics
Edited by H. Jon Rosenbaum and Peter C. Sederberg
A study of vigilantes and their brand of "establishment violence."
$10.00

The Family in History
Edited by Charles E. Rosenberg
Fascinating examples of the reciprocal influence of the family and society throughout history.
$10.00

University of Pennsylvania Press
Philadelphia, Pa. 19174

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plastic, to be molded into something new which has the independent life of any created work but is, at the same time, "true to life."

The Revised New Biological Syllabus

36 LECTURES IN BIOLOGY. *By Salvador E. Luria. MIT. $8.95.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH W. MEEKER

Everyone has heard that a revolution in biology has begun in recent decades, and that much more of the same is to be expected. Some popular books help to explain what the biological fuss is all about, but most of us need a good solid refresher course to learn the language of the new biology and to understand its principles and prospects. Salvador Luria's *36 Lectures in Biology* provides an opportunity to get acquainted with neobiology under the guidance of a Nobel Laureate who is one of its major architects.

The book looks and feels like a course syllabus. It is a lightly edited transcript of lectures given by Luria in his general biology course at MIT in the year 1973-74. The typewritten manuscript, reproduced by offset, is illustrated with blackboard sketches which remain innocent of artistry. Luria's intention is to retain "the flavor and casualness of the lecture room," as he puts it in the preface. He has also retained the classroom's less casual aspects by including appendixes full of examination questions and a concise crib in organic chemistry for the uninitiated. Anyone who may have forgotten how it feels to sit in a stiff seat and take notes will renew that experience, perhaps with some of the boredom and bitterness that are parts of the scene. Of course it is a relief to know that the exam questions in the back of the syllabus need not be faced at term's end.

Yet they must be. Biochemistry, genetics, and physiology are the stuff of life in more ways than had been guessed a few years ago. More than education, religion, or nationality, they make us what we are and determine what we may become. Biological processes have mapped organic life for millions of years without the help of human awareness. Now that biologists like Salvador Luria have made us aware, we run the risk of muddling those ancient systems unless we can learn quickly to show more respect for biological complexity than we have in the past. Biology's examination questions will have to be answered if humanity hopes to avoid flunking its course.

Luria begins with four lectures on the biology of cells. These introduce the central theme of the course: the biological programming of organisms. Like his colleague and fellow Nobel Prize winner, Jacques Monod, Luria regards organic cells as minicomputers carrying out the instructions stored on their DNA tapes. Unlike Monod, he does not insist on philosophizing his way toward determinism from the computer analogy, but restricts himself to careful description of the effects of biological programming upon evolutionary phylogeny and ontogeny.

Evolution speaks through biochemistry, which Luria explores in nine fat lectures. Then follow eight lectures on genetics, the heart of the course. Here the arcane mysteries of DNA and RNA are revealed as they work out the destinies of organs and organisms and as they experiment with new forms of life. Seven lectures on developmental biology follow to explain how the genetic code works to create new bottles for its ancient wine in each reproductive generation. The course concludes with eight lectures on physiology in which Luria explains how biological programs manifest themselves through organic functions.

Explaining the facts is Luria's sole purpose, and he permits no stylistic elegance to stand in his way. There are the usual classroom anecdotes designed to make scientific lectures

JOSEPH W. MEEKER is senior tutor in humanities at Athabasca University. He has pursued ecological research with the National Park Service, National Forest Service, and under Konrad Lorenz at the Max Planck Institute in Germany. His two books on the relationships between the humanities and contemporary biology, *The Comedy of Survival* and *Spheres of Life*, were published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more palatable, but they are seldom integrated with the subject. Transitions to new topics are invariably made by rhetorical questions that no one but the lecturer can answer ("how is a polypeptide chain made?"). Pretending that the audience has asked a question may occasionally arouse real curiosity, but as Luria endlessly uses this worn device it merely confirms his superior knowledge compared to the ignorance of his hearers. It is difficult to imagine genuine questions being asked by Luria's students, for the gap between podium and audience is broad and rigidly kept. We readers are held at a similar distance, with little sense that a real human being is addressing us.

Traditional scientific objectivity requires that the personality of the scientist must disappear so that he may stand as a purified container of accurate information. Luria is such a model for his students; the lecturer is invisible, leaving only the lecture. Another threat to objectivity is the tendency to think creatively, fancifully, or reflectively upon the topics being studied, but Luria manages to avoid this danger as well. No intellectual provocation inspires Luria's students to think or distracts them from their main job: to *know*. With personalities and interesting ideas out of the way, this book is a good encyclopedic compilation of the known facts of modern biology, useful for reference.

In the closing moments of his final lecture, Luria at last indulges in philosophy. Suddenly we are glad that he waited so long, for his philosophy is not new, interesting, or adequate to the facts described in his lectures. "Over the billions of years," he tells us, "evolution was fumbling, imprecise, and opportunistic—in other words, existential." Philosophers may wonder at this characterization of existentialism, but they will remain unastonished at Luria's further assertion that life is "the almost accidental product of a purposeless historical process." Such observations have not been news since Nietzsche. No fresh thoughts are offered by Luria to interpret the new biological information he has provided.

In Luria's hands, the biological revolution does not seem like a revolution at all, but is merely a normal step forward within conventional science. The new information from biology's laboratories is fitted carefully within the hierarchical epistemology that has dominated scientific thinking for the past four centuries. Luria never doubts the adequacy of analytical logic to explain the processes of life, never questions the results of careful experiments conducted according to standard scientific methods, never suspects that science may oversimplify living processes by examining them only with quantitative objectivity, and never does he hint that an interpretation of scientific data may tell more about the scientist's personal and cultural background than about an objective natural world. When Luria says "we don't know" he simply means that more research is needed to discover the relevant facts, not that science's usual methods of knowing are perhaps inappropriate to their present tasks. This course is designed for MIT students who will move comfortably into the laboratories of their former professors, not for those who will build a new science upon new principles.

Starting Out in the Twenties

EDMUND WILSON. THE TWENTIES. *Edited with an introduction by Leon Edel. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $10.*

Reviewed by KENNETH S. LYNN

Edmund Wilson did not much care for his mother. Her intelligence was limited and her values were philistine. She made no effort to conceal her hostility toward her brilliant but psychologically troubled husband, and was openly disappointed that her son's gifts were literary rather than athletic. Although she never read Edmund's writings, she continued into very old age to attend Princeton football games. Her public manner was "brusque and gruff," while in private her mood was often ugly: throughout his childhood, Wilson remembered, she had administered deadly efficient spankings to him with a metal

KENNETH S. LYNN is professor of American history at Johns Hopkins University. He has published several books, including a biography of William Dean Howells.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hairbrush. In addition to her other charms, she was totally deaf.

After college, the son got out of his mother's reach as fast as he could. He moved to New York and eventually married Mary Blair, an actress with the Provincetown Players. In 1923 the young Wilsons had a daughter, Rosalind Baker Wilson. Their marriage, however, did not prosper. Mary devoted more and more of her evenings to the theater, and Edmund took up with other women. A long period of estrangement finally led to divorce in 1930. What the quarreling parents thought about their daughter during the first seven years of her life is difficult to say, for Edmund Wilson's journals of the period mention the child almost not at all. But from the few passing references to her, it is clear that neither Edmund nor Mary Wilson had the slightest intention of getting stuck with the kid, and after hiring a nurse they promptly shipped poor Rosalind off to New Jersey—to Edmund's mother's place.

The sickening irresponsibility of this action, and its attendant irony, is never once acknowledged by Wilson in his journals, or by Leon Edel, who edited them for publication. Instead, Wilson spends his imaginative energies on astonishingly detailed descriptions of the plants, insects, and people who swim into his ken, including the little blind crabs that fall out of his pubic hair as he shaves his testicles following an unfortunate sexual encounter. Edel is so overwhelmed by the compassion and selflessness of the keeper of these accounts that he has to turn to Sophoclean drama to find his like. Edmund Wilson, he says, was "at one" with Neoptolemus, who could not be deterred from recognizing his "common humanity" with the wounded Philoctetes and finally cured him of his sickness. If this be literary criticism, who wouldn't prefer football?

In abdicating parental responsibility, Wilson also betrayed himself, which is the deepest irony of all in this ironic book. For the recurrent theme of *The Twenties* is Wilson's terrible sense of unreality. Literature is not life, he keeps saying as he struggles desperately to make contact with the world that lies beyond his awesome consumption of books. Like the later Howells, like Stephen Crane and Frank Norris, like the writers and artists who had flooded into Greenwich Village while he was still a student at Princeton, he equated the essential reality of America with its lower depths. He picked up prostitutes at the Tango Gardens and semipro waitresses in cheap restaurants, not only because he needed them to scratch his sexual itch, but because he wanted them to tell him the stories of their lives, and thereby quicken his own.

Of the writers of his own generation, he reminds me most of Dos Passos. The hectic, almost syncopated pace of his journal-keeping style is strongly reminiscent of the strange, hurried scenarios of *Manhattan Transfer*. Wilson also believed with Dos Passos that America was the speech of its people, with the result that *The Twenties* contains as much slang, as many snatches of popular songs and advertising slogans, as *U.S.A.* Yet he is forever making mistakes that Dos Passos would have scorned, despite his editor's ravings about the infallible accuracy of Wilson's ear. Thus in a quick glimpse at steel-town academia, he tells of students fucking in the halls at "the Carnegie Tech"—but the tough, in-the-know effect he is striving for is shattered by the superfluous definite article. Furthermore, the range of his interest in American culture is drastically limited. His comments on the films of Charlie Chaplin are shrewd, and—in welcome contrast to the nostalgic sentimentality of other memoirists—he is bitchily perceptive about e. e. cummings, Frank Crowninshield, and the wags at the Algonquin, among other literary lights. But in the first "golden age of American sports," he has nothing significant to say about Dempsey, Tunney, Ruth, Tilden, or Jones and cannot even manage an allusion to Harvard football without a tin-ear reference to a fight song he calls "Down the Field for Harvard."

Except for Sacco and Vanzetti, politics is also outside his field of observation in this period; so is the jazz of Calloway and Armstrong—which is surprising, given his obsession for going slumming. Yet even if he had gone up to Harlem every night, would he have had less of a sense of unreality? I do not believe so. In sidestepping the middle-class

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life that he perforce would have had to live with his daughter, Wilson lost touch with the very sort of experience he was looking for—an experience that might have enabled him to comprehend American life in the 1920s and to write a really searching book about it.

Out of Sight—Out of Mind

OUR KINDLY PARENT . . . THE STATE. The Juvenile Justice System and How It Works. *By Patrick T. Murphy. Viking. $8.95.*

Reviewed by STEVEN SCHLOSSMAN

A standard jeremiad on the juvenile justice system has developed over the past decade, invoked, like all jeremiads, to remedy tangible evils and vent collective confusion and frustration. Popular accounts by such authors as the journalist Howard James (*Children in Trouble*) and the Philadelphia judges Lisa Richette (*The Throwaway Children*) and Lois Forer (*"No One Will Lissen"*) have dramatized, if diffused, a persistent complaint of many social scientists since the late 1950s: reformatories and juvenile courts not only fail to rehabilitate but compound problems of adjustment for delinquents and their families. Patrick Murphy's *Our Kindly Parent . . . The State*, though idiosyncratic in detail, is similar to these earlier books in tone. It reinforces attempts made since the Gault decision of 1967 to guarantee juvenile offenders their basic civil liberties and to establish, more nebulously, their "right to treatment."

Even if there is little strikingly new in Murphy's analysis, his personal role in forcing reformulation of Illinois juvenile law is fascinating. Appointed in 1970 as attorney for young offenders and "minors in need of supervision" in Chicago's antiquated juvenile court, Murphy was compelled to develop

● STEVEN SCHLOSSMAN is assistant professor in the Department of Education at the University of Chicago, and author of articles and reviews for *Commentary*, *Teachers College Record*, and *Science and Society*. His first book, *Love and the American Delinquent: The Theory and Practice of Juvenile Justice, 1825–1920*, will be published next year.

The Crisis of Responsibility

The Crisis of Responsibility: Man as the Source of Accountability
By William Horosz

The breakdown in human responsibility—of crisis proportions in our society—is the immediate concern in this well-reasoned response to the deluge of fuzzy thinking by those who would escape individual liability in the anonymity of social responsibility. $12.50.

University of Oklahoma Press
1005 Asp Avenue
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

DRAWINGS BY THOMAS ROWLANDSON
In the Huntington Collection
by Robert R. Wark

The Huntington collection of Rowlandson drawings—over 500 in all—is probably the largest and most comprehensive at present in a public museum. This book reproduces and catalogs the entire collection, repeating six drawings in full color to illustrate the introduction. It will be of immense value to the student of art history, and the layman will be delighted with the vigor and the sheer virtuosity of Rowlandson's work. 398 pp., illus., color. $20.00

HUNTINGTON LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS
San Marino • California • 91108

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

several wily judicial strategies in order to circumvent politically vulnerable local judges and entrenched professional social workers whose primary commitments were less to their clientele than to the *status quo*. While Murphy scrupulously protects the identities of children and parents in court, correctly insisting that in delinquency proceedings both are equally on trial, he exposes with relish those whose sloth, pretension, and concern for self-preservation have impeded his reform crusade. Sometimes Murphy hits below the belt—for example, when he condemns the director of the Illinois Department of Corrections more for his privileged "Brahmin" education at Exeter and Yale than for his obstinacy as a witness in court. Portraying himself as an apostle to children in trouble, Murphy also tends to be self-righteous about his cause and mawkish in his descriptions of the poor. By and large, though, his portraits of individual social workers, psychiatrists, probation officers, guards, and administrators are balanced and his depiction of delinquents and their families genuinely heartrending. No rigid ideologue, Murphy concedes that without active cooperation from a number of federal judges, and even from the office of the district attorney, his reform campaign would have gone for naught.

Murphy's most telling points concern standard operating procedures within the correctional establishment, notably the unjustified use of the neglect plea, of probation, and especially of drugs. Arbitrariness, rationalized in the metaphors of mercy and love, is the keynote of the juvenile justice system, and also its most beguiling defense. Correctional workers often accuse lawyers like Murphy of "caring more about legal principles than children," of failing to comprehend the benevolent intent behind incarceration of noncriminal teen-agers. But their view breaks down in light of the juvenile courts' benign neglect of institutional care. Unlike nineteenth-century reformatories, which relied mainly on corporal punishment and exhausting physical labor, modern facilities emphasize techniques of "behavioral modification" to maintain order. In practice, this means little more than the liberal use of drugs. Murphy documents enough instances of indiscriminate drug therapy sanctioned by behavioral scientists to justify grave concern about how to regulate the burgeoning numbers of child development specialists who claim unique expertise in the treatment of problem youth. Several of Murphy's arresting vignettes merit comparison with scenes from *A Clockwork Orange,* with doctor-gurus prescribing potions in the name of moral uplift and "negative reinforcement," and demonstrate convincingly that behavioral scientists can easily be co-opted by the old guard, who still administer most institutions.

Our Kindly Parent . . . The State is better at detailing present injustices than it is at probing philosophic dilemmas and historical constraints on the formulation of policy. Murphy's analysis sometimes descends into bathetic whimpering—as, for instance, when he rails against "do-gooders" (presumably he is not one of them) who are victims of their own enthusiasm and middle-class upbringing and who seem congenitally incapable of empathizing with the poor. Elsewhere Murphy indulges in grandstand generalization, geared more to shock and to sell books than to instruct: "The entire juvenile-justice system is a limitless wasteland of insanity." Numerous arguments go without amplification and specification. Typical is his assertion that 90 percent of children in juvenile court are there because of "racial attitudes and poverty," a statement that obscures as much as it reveals. Based on questionable empirical data, it also ignores the extent to which the poor today, and throughout the twentieth century, have used the court to unburden themselves of child-rearing responsibilities during their children's difficult adolescent years. Finally, it is difficult to understand why Murphy contends, as he does toward the end of his book, that we ought to retain separate courts for children. The thrust of his argument suggests that children would be better off if held accountable to adult standards of criminal liability. Although there is much to be said, pro and con, for this proposition, Murphy unfortunately does little to illuminate it.

Occasionally shallow and shrill, the book nonetheless serves as an important reminder of how little interested most Americans are in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

public institutions with a predominantly poor clientele. Reform schools and juvenile courts are largely isolated, forgotten fortresses, dumping grounds onto which the states pour their human refuse—out of sight and mind. Periodic "crises" may make these institutions newsworthy, encouraging legislators to vie with one another in expressions of sympathy, anger, and disbelief, but they rarely lead to substantive change. Until the next "crisis" emerges, all is assumed to be well. In *Our Kindly Parent . . . The State*, Murphy clearly demonstrates that this attitude is untenable and irresponsible. It remains for others, however, to explore theoretical and practical alternatives more systematically and imaginatively than Murphy appears able to do.

Waiting for Emily

THE LIFE OF EMILY DICKINSON. *By Richard B. Sewall. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Two vols. $30.*

Reviewed by CHARLES R. LARSON

How can this be? A two-volume biography of a person about whom almost nothing is known? I can remember a student arguing heatedly that Emily Dickinson's poetry must certainly have been written by someone else (Margaret Fuller, who went down in a shipwreck in 1850, just about the time Emily started acting a little peculiar) since no one can live in the United States without leaving a few pertinent facts—even in the nineteenth century. This is, after all, not Elizabethan England we're talking about (so my student argued); there ought to be at least a few footprints somewhere.

The footprints are all over Richard B. Sewall's superb biography—a model for future literary biographers to follow. Every scrap of information pertaining to Emily Dickinson and the people who surrounded her has been tracked down, analyzed, and interpreted; and if the organization of the work

---

CHARLES R. LARSON is professor of literature at American University, Washington, D.C. His most recent book, *The Novel in the Third World*, will be published this fall.

Vanderbilt University announces the Harold Stirling Vanderbilt Scholarships.

The Scholarships are awarded "to students who have demonstrated qualities characteristic of Mr. Vanderbilt: A lively intellect, sound scholarship, tenacity of purpose, versatility, a commitment to excellence in worthwhile endeavor," and "for exceptional accomplishment and high promise . . . in science, music, art, journalism, creative writing, debate, dance, theatre, entrepreneurial activity and academic work generally."

Undergraduate scholarships provide $5000 per year for four years. **Office of Admissions, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. 37240.**

ROSARY COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

Villa Schifanoia in Florence, Italy

Art restoration	MFA
Art history	MA
Printmaking	MA
Sculpture	MA
Painting	MA

An American accredited program offering

advanced degrees
. . . one to three years
Summer travel seminars

Request catalog:

Director of Foreign Studies
Rosary College
7900 W. Division Street
River Forest, IL 60305
Phone: 312-369-6320
Ext 346

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

itself (volume 1 for her family; volume 2 for Emily and her friends) leads to a few minor structural weaknesses, these are unimportant once the reader has completed a reading of the whole work. Mostly, Sewall's organization increases the expectation of the reader; and Emily, of course, is worth waiting for (the chapter devoted to her birth opens the second volume), as her most accomplished biographer knows only too well. Someday, Sewall concludes, more information about her is bound to show up, though "the whole truth about Emily Dickinson will elude us always; she seems almost willfully to have seen to that."

Emily's letters (the 1,049 that have survived, from an estimated 10,000) often were deliberately obscure, phrased in such a way that, should they fall into foreign hands, they would be all but undecipherable. Her poems, Sewall repeatedly warns us, also should not be taken literally as they have been so often by earlier biographers. There are simply too many of them (1,775), often canceling one another out. Sewall has, wisely, tried to discover Emily Dickinson more from external events in her lifetime, and especially from those people around her, rather than by relying too heavily on her extraordinary poems. The problem here is one of demythologization, of balancing the work of those others who have gone before him with his own subdued approach—best described as balanced caution. There are no real surprises here, no sensational revelations, though the people in Emily Dickinson's life are a little more humanized than they often have been in past studies.

The facts are still rather sparse. Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) remains the Queen Recluse probably for no single reason but because of a combination of events that happened to her in her early lifetime. The myths tell us that she was in love with a married man (or possibly several) older than she, who found it impossible to reciprocate her love. They tell us also that Emily's father was a kind of ogre, with whom she is said to have had a love/hate relationship. (Another version has it that her father broke off her affair with a young man he considered unworthy of her.) One or more of these incidents is supposed to have led to her withdrawal, and the story has it that she never left her house or saw anyone (except for her immediate family) the last fifteen or twenty years of her life. Closed in her room she wrote her poems, and was not much interested in seeing them in print. (Only seven of her poems were published in her lifetime.)

The evidence, Sewall shows us, may often be somewhat different than has previously been suggested. Emily's relationship with her father, Edward Dickinson, may have been anything but strained. She may, in fact, have had an amicable relationship with both parents largely because they permitted her to do what she wanted to do (write), though Sewall believes that Emily's mother may have had little idea of what she was up to. "Oddly enough, although it is seldom seen this way, the greatest tribute that Emily paid her mother lay perhaps in the fact that she never wanted to leave the home Mrs. Dickinson helped create." Sewall also argues that there is little evidence that Emily's schooling stifled her free spirit (as has been forwarded); and, on the subject of her early loves, he suggests that it is most likely that the young men her own age simply did not interest her intellectually.

This is not to negate the importance of any of the later attractions she did have to older men (Charles Wadsworth, Samuel Bowles, Judge Otis Lord)—with some of whom she may have been genuinely in love.

> Throughout her life, she never achieved a single, wholly satisfying relationship with anyone she had to be near, or with, for any length of time. Vinnie [her sister] was the closest, perhaps; but even she spoke of her family as living together like "friendly and absolute monarchs" . . . and to Emily it seemed often as if she and Vinnie had "come up for the first time from two wells where we had hitherto been bred. . . ." As for Emily's correspondents, affectionate as she might have been in her letters, they were always at a safe distance.

All her life, Sewall says, Emily Dickinson demanded too much of people—more than they were usually willing to return. Sewall sees this as particularly true of the men with whom Emily maintained epistolary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relationships, especially her several potential editors. As a group, they seemed unsympathetic to the fact that she was forging a new kind of poetry—clearly unlike anything they had seen. (This is, of course, more of a comment on their tastes than on Emily's merits as a poet.) Thus, although her letters may be read as cryptic pleas for publication, these requests for help in achieving some sort of literary recognition all went unnoticed. (Emily sent more than fifty poems to one unsympathetic editor.)

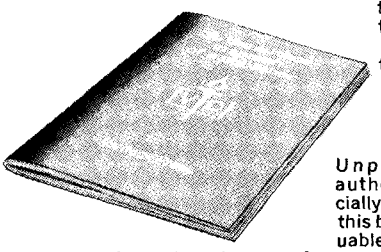
What emerges as the most likely reason for Emily Dickinson's reclusion is the quadrangular relationship that existed among Emily and her brother, Austin; his wife, Susan; and his mistress, Mabel Loomis Todd. Sewall shows that Emily relied on her brother for emotional support during much of her life and that when she realized that Austin had made an unhappy marriage to Susan Gilbert (with whom Emily already had a strong, possibly homoerotic, attachment), Emily developed a sense of guilt for having encouraged the marriage that had led to so much unhappiness. (Austin's affair with Mabel Todd lasted thirteen years and drained all the emotions of those involved; it was Mabel Todd who edited Emily's poems after her death, further increasing the wrath of Susan Gilbert Dickinson.) Emily comforted Austin during the years of his frustrating marriage to Susan and made it possible for his affair with Mabel Todd to continue in the clandestine manner that was necessary because of the times. Oddly, while the affair was going on, Emily never entered the house next door where Austin and Susan lived, some three hundred feet away. (Mabel Todd never saw Emily, but talked to her from the bottom of the stairs.)

Regarding Emily's solitariness, Sewall has at least one thing to add to the record. Emily Dickinson was not quite the total recluse others have thought her to be. She permitted certain people (other than the members of her immediate family, of course) to visit her: Marie Norcross (one of her cousins), Otis Phillips Lord (the one person for whom there is evidence to show a definite romantic attachment, a deep love, in fact), and, of course, her obtuse "editor" Thomas Went-

To the author in search of a publisher

YOU ARE INVITED to send for a free, illustrated brochure which explains how your book can be published, promoted and marketed.

Whether your subject is fiction, non-fiction or poetry, scientific, scholarly, specialized (even controversial) this handsome 52-page brochure will show you how to arrange for prompt publication.



Unpublished authors, especially, will find this booklet valuable and informative. For your free copy, or more information, write to:

Vantage Press, Inc., Dept. F-71
516 W. 34 St., New York, N.Y. 10001

New Explorations in Mind and Learning

An Introduction To EDUCATIONAL SUGGESTOLOGY

Edward Petrel-Petrelevicius

A well-researched study which explores the possibilities of utilizing conscious and systematic hypnotic suggestion in the field of education as a method for overcoming student learning disabilities.

Provides a complete discussion on the various forms of hypnosis and concludes with a brief history of educational hypnosis.

$7.95 ISBN 0-8059-2058-7 LC 74-83154

DORRANCE & COMPANY
"Publishers Since 1920"
1617 J.F.K. Blvd., Phila., Pa. 19103

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worth Higginson. No doubt there were others who visited her also, but for the time being Sewall has given us all of the story there is to tell. Probably that is as it should be. There is something a little unsettling about making our most private of poets that transparent.

Plain Jane

JANE AUSTEN, *By Douglas Bush. Macmillan. $6.95; paper, $3.95.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM HALEY

Douglas Bush launches his book with a glance at the huge convoy that has preceded it. In the past fifty years alone there have been "some sixty-seven books about her [Jane Austen] and her work, some thirty-one of them in the last decade . . . and hundreds of essays and articles." It is certain that by the end of this year there will be many more. For December 16 will be the bicentenary of Jane Austen's birth. Professor Bush's study is not, however, a commemorative volume; it is an addition to the Masters of World Literature series. Two questions about the book arise: Is it getting Jane Austen out of her class to put her alongside Dante, Milton, Balzac, Chekhov, and Stendhal? What has Douglas Bush to say that has not been said before?

As for the first, although André Gide objected to Jane Austen's being compared with Shakespeare, A. C. Bradley—a far greater Shakespearian, and indeed all-around critic—had no hesitation in mentioning them both in the same breath. Nor have others had. And now that Kipling is at last emerging from the unmerited penumbra in which jealousy, misconception, and slander have kept him for more than half a century, his evidence too can be cited as worthy of acceptance.

> Jane went to Paradise:
> That was only fair.
> Good Sir Walter followed her,
> And armed her up the stair.
> Henry and Tobias,
> And Miguel of Spain,
> Stood with Shakespeare at the top
> To welcome Jane—

Even the ranks of Bloomsbury, who enjoyed carping much more than cheering, were broken. For Virginia Woolf, Jane Austen was "the most perfect artist among women, the writer whose books are immortal." E. M. Forster declared Jane Austen to be his favorite author.

Yet the exact justification for all this has remained elusive. The problem is not a lack of explanations of Jane Austen's genius. It is the multiplicity of them. And a hundred and fifty years after the six great novels were published, the stream has turned into a spate. That means it has become less pellucid, in fact muddied. In the belief that no one has yet caught the right answer, almost each new attempt fishes up something abstruse or recondite. Goodness knows what we shall have been presented with by the time Christmas comes.

It is Douglas Bush's great merit that he sails sensibly in the middle of the stream with his eyes and his ears open. He has not been deaf to the sirens of modern Janeite scholarship. He records the more important of them in footnotes, himself proceeding undeviatingly on his way. He is intent on description and exposition, not imagination and fancy. He is in the great tradition of didactic criticism, anxious to display the virtues of his subject, not the cleverness of himself; a plain man presenting a plain Jane. He first sets the scene of the England Jane Austen knew; then, after narrating her life, proceeds to the early writings, following these with seven chapters on the six great novels and *The Watsons*. A closing chapter on *Sanditon* leads to a brief conclusion. There is an eclectic list of suggestions for further reading, and a useful index. His prose reads easily; his judgments are sensible.

Not that one agrees with all his glosses and assessments. (No Janeite's views will ever be identical with any other's.) He thinks more highly of *Emma* than I do. *Emma* has long seemed to me to be Jane Austen's *Comedy of Errors*, and just as mechanically contrived. There is a little too much symmetry in its

---

SIR WILLIAM HALEY was editor of the *London Times* for fourteen years, and, before that, was Director-General of the British Broadcasting Corporation for eight years.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

characters' false assumptions. Admittedly Mr. Knightley is the most attractive of Jane Austen's heroes, and his growing awareness of his love for Emma is beautifully done. Mr. Woodhouse is her gentlest extravagance. He always amuses and never irritates. Some of his sayings are part of England's national chest of quotations. Mrs. Elton is a superbly odious vulgarian. But the *fons et origo* of the tale's misunderstandings is unconvincing. No doubt there have been and still are girls as persistently stupid as Harriet Smith, but it is impossible to believe that any Emma would have persevered so long with one of them. Harriet is the weakest of all Jane Austen's mainsprings.

Emma's greatest gift is her ability to recover herself, not merely from the pitfalls into which her lack of judgment has led her, but in the reader's regard. Her moment of verbal cruelty to Miss Bates is shocking. To forgive her seems impossible. Her mortification after Mr. Knightley has rebuked her—not solely because he has done so, but also because she realizes that she has been cruel—reinstates her in our liking. I would not say in our affection; for me she is the one Jane Austen heroine who does not gain that.

Miss Bates's garrulity, and Emma's gibe about it, raise the question of cruelty in Jane Austen. Miss Bates's weakness is harmless. At worst it bores her hearers (and perhaps some of her readers, but it is dangerous for them to skip). Emma's uncharitable joke may be justified as an episode necessary to the development of her relationship with Mr. Knightley, but very occasionally Jane Austen can go to the point of paining her reader and spoiling his enjoyment. No one has a moment's pity for Mr. Collins, or Mr. Elton, or Mrs. Norris. But Mrs. Bennet is too much of a bad thing, and any intended mirth is overwhelmed by pity for the family who must suffer her. True, most of the world's laughter is at other people's misfortunes. But for her husband, her children, and all their circle, Mrs. Bennet's foolishness is a major misfortune. Like W. S. Gilbert's, Jane Austen's sense of the ridiculous can lead her to hurt.

Professor Bush's chapters on *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* are worthy of Jane Austen's twin peaks. (Some sentimental readers add *Persuasion*. It has one magical moment—Wentworth's overhearing of Anne's belief in constancy, and her reception of the letter he immediately writes her. The rest of *Persuasion*'s attraction is its subdued mellowness. Not only the fact that it was the last of her completed works makes it Jane Austen's *The Tempest*.)

Whether *Pride and Prejudice* or *Mansfield Park* is the greater is an unfruitful question. They cannot be compared. They are not alike. *Pride and Prejudice* is a comedy of character and of manners as consummate as, and more sustained than, any by Molière. There are moments when its brilliance is dazzling. *Mansfield Park* cannot equal them, because in it Jane Austen's purpose was different; more than in any of her other novels her inspiration was purely moral. This is exemplified by Sir Thomas Bertram's "anguish arising from the conviction of his own errors in the education of his daughters." Jane Austen's repentant fathers can move us deeply—Mr. Bennet surprisingly so.

At the heart of all the trouble at Mansfield Park is selfishness. It is comically depicted throughout the preparations for the staging of the amateur theatricals. It is seriously and brilliantly personified in Henry and Mary Crawford. They are true catalysts. Jane Austen's half-hint that at least one of them might have changed is a rare instance of her deceiving herself. They are unique in her fiction; in Douglas Bush's words, "novel and special figures." Being Jane Austen's creations, they are unique in all fiction. Fanny Price is the perfect foil to them. Her opposition to all they stand for raises her from meekness to dignity.

Mansfield Park, says Douglas Bush, is "a test case for critics and readers." It was "her most serious self; . . . a more deeply analytical novel than Jane Austen had yet written or was to write." One obstacle to a full appreciation of *Mansfield Park* is that its talk is not lively. It has been said that Jane Austen's greatest gift was for writing conversation; Douglas Bush calls her "a superb mistress of dialogue." But the more one reads her, the more one questions whether, even in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, any society was capable of such long utterances in such meticulously worded and occasionally involved sentences. It is good that Professor

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bush has not burked this nagging question. He puts forward the "general premise . . . that in novels convention had established, for the well-bred, a more rounded formalism than prevailed in actual speech." At the same time, he admits that Jane Austen was not always successful in writing dialogue. While in *Sense and Sensibility* the style of whoever is talking can be "a more or less subtle index or reflection of moral and cultural differences . . . there are moments when Elinor's speech can be almost incredible. . . . When Elinor has to tell Marianne that she has for four months known of Edward's and Lucy's engagement, her speeches about duty and endurance have the structured syntax of a moral essay. . . ." Yet in spite of this, the tide of Jane Austen's genius sweeps us along.

A final word of appreciation must be given to Professor Bush for using R. W. Chapman's splendid edition as the text of the novels. Chapman's tireless and inexorable pursuit of textual accuracy—I have personal memories of how passionate it could be—his notes, his short essays, his chronologies, his well-chosen illustrations, these and other benefits that he conferred on Jane Austen and on her readers entitle him to be saluted as the greatest Janeite of them all.

The Vietnam Connection

DOG SOLDIERS. *By Robert Stone. Houghton Mifflin. $8.95.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY KLEIN

Dog Soldiers brings the Vietnamese War home by sheer plot. Although Robert Stone dedicated this extraordinary novel to the Committee of Responsibility, explicit politics never dominates his story or his heroin metaphor. The smuggled dope retains its quiet meaning, and hence leaves a particularly vicious wake. Since both characters and readers are lured by a simple payoff, this novel hooks us like a cultural thriller.

JEFFREY KLEIN teaches creative writing and literature at the University of California, Berkeley, Extension. He is literary editor of the magazine *Gazette,* which will have its premier issue this winter.

The first section of *Dog Soldiers* takes place in Vietnam in the company of John Converse, a free-lance journalist and onetime playwright. He has journeyed to Vietnam out of guilt and curiosity and fear. Once there, he witnesses what every other writer has seen: "The world of things transformed itself into a single overwhelming act of murder." Early in the novel, out of nowhere, a bomb explodes in a Vietnamese tax office. Anyone—the Viet Cong, the Buddhists, an irate taxpayer—could have planted it. Afterward it is impossible to tell the difference between the remains of chickens and children. American brutality is even more indiscriminate; one day the U.S. Army decides to machine-gun whole herds of elephants because these beasts have been known to carry enemy supplies.

Violence and Vietnam are hard enough to comprehend separately; together they baffle the merely curious, like Converse. "Facing him across the bar were fifteen uniformly beautiful girls in heavy makeup . . . they turned their eyes on him with identical expressions of bland, fathomless contempt." When Converse gets too close to the actual fighting, he panics, breaks down, quivers, cries. He becomes impotent, then gradually realizes he has no play to write. It seems crucial that something come out of his Vietnamese stay, so he agrees to take part in a heroin deal. The dope stems from a Vietnamese colonel, but Converse's contact is a chic, blond American woman "who had taken leave of life in a way which he found irresistible." His dealing is thus an attempt at erotic communication.

"Weight" is another name for the heroin. Converse bears this weight through the Vietnamese heat like a festering limb. He passes it to an old Marine buddy named Hicks, who carries it through the rest of the novel until his exploded arm is literally rotting. Although Hicks lacks Converse's deprecating wit, he has more self-discipline, more self-respect. He is an American samurai who attempts to maintain the spiritual life even when dealing. He knows the dope is an illusion, but when trouble comes, he decides—like a serious warrior—to make a stand. When the civilians lose their sense of purpose, this career soldier takes over.

Trouble comes because Converse and his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wife Marge are, not so subtly, seeking it. She doesn't have the necessary cash to pay off Hicks when he arrives in the States; she falls for him because he is ". . . the fear, the danger, the death. The thing itself." Marge's preference for the lower depths seems designed to confirm her lack of will. Although she has worked for the University of California, she prefers the authenticity of her new job as porno theater cashier (". . . she flashed the mooches' fingers laboring over their damp half-erections, burrowing in the moldy subsoil of their trousers like arachnids on a decomposing log"). Not surprisingly, Marge drifts into drugs and is quickly hooked on the smuggled heroin. Her need is more than physical. As she flees with Hicks from murder to murder, she needs righteously serene highs.

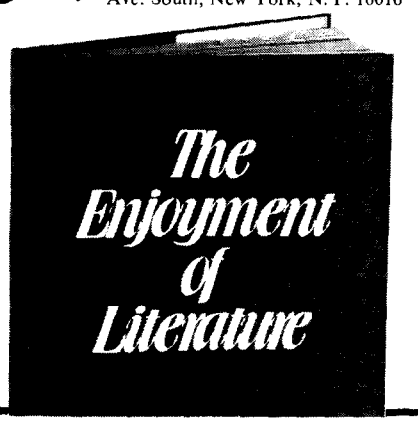
Trouble comes, as in Vietnam, out of nowhere. Two thugs try to surprise Hicks, but he waylays them and escapes with Marge. When Converse returns home a couple of weeks later, the furious thugs are waiting. They burn his hand on an electric stove and threaten to fry his face if he doesn't confess the whereabouts of the dope. The chief thug, a Jew with an IQ of 170, alternately addresses Converse as *bubi* and as a vindictive nasty little coward. His smelly sidekick invents Vietnam atrocity stories in order to arouse women and Converse. The thugs are lovers as well, and amazingly, as the chase continues, Stone makes us appreciate their brutal affection for each other. The bad guys here are not so different from the rest. In fact, they are addicts on maintenance who are cooperating in the federal investigation.

The federal investigation, however, is crooked. A bohemian narcotics agent has arranged this deal from the first. Like everyone else in the novel, he disowns responsibility. The Converses rationalize addiction because the world, especially Vietnam, is such a monstrous place; the chic operators at both ends of the payoff have only contempt for the low-lifes they must traffic with. Even the Vietnamese colonel who supplied the heroin believes himself an idealist corrupted by Americans. In Stone's world, everyone deceives himself, but only the powerful and the lucky survive.

A FINE BOOK FOR
A LOVER OF PLANTS
WILLIAM BARTRAM
Botanical and Zoological Drawings from Georgia and Florida, 1756-1788
reproduced in the original colors
SPECIAL PRICE UNTIL
December 19, 1975
$25.00
Send check with order to AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY (special)
104 South Fifth Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19106

How to recognize and fully appreciate great writing

Literature's original role as a rich, accessible, commonly shared experience is enthusiastically recaptured in this fascinating book. Included are hundreds of excerpts from great English and American works followed by commentary. Size 7″ x 10″. By **BERNARD GREBANIER.**
$9.95, at bookstores, or send check to CROWN PUBLISHERS, 419 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10016
Crown



Several do survive, more than would remain in a simpler book. Hicks has fled to his old guru, who owns a mountain near the Mexican border. The big shoot-out takes place in a counter-culture forest strung with lights and loudspeakers, mirrors and dolls. Hicks opens up with his army weapons. *Pwock* goes the grenade launcher. Bullets fly in cross- and double-cross fire. The forest blinks on and off as the guru intones: "Nothingness is Not Different from Form. They Are the Same." In this confused battle we side with Hicks and the Converses—as we identify with the Americans—basically be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cause we have traveled with them from the first. But they don't really know what they're doing. "Nobody knows," Converse says in a rare moment of confidence. "That's the principle we were defending over there. That's why we fought the war."

The irony in *Dog Soldiers* stings because it is so understated. A Catch-22 or Strangelovian treatment of the Vietnamese War would have much less impact. A grounded, old-fashioned story, however, must be slyly surreal; otherwise it is likely to be less interesting than a book of reportage or a television documentary. Robert Stone's realism is warped from within. On first breathless reading, we have no time to analyze the warping patterns. Even when we notice recurring twists, they cannot be withdrawn from the text. Initially Hicks is amazed that Converse wants to deal with heroin.

"I didn't know you were such a money freak." Converse shrugged.

"I suppose it's the way we're brought up."

Or when Converse is trying to analyze small details of the war: "It was just as well not to wonder why. There was never any satisfaction in that." Excerpted, these quotes sound exceedingly flat. But in the midst of atrocity, they keep the story in check and generate an ironic tension. If the characters fully comprehended the novel's events, they would be overwhelmed. At the same time, full comprehension is labeled useless—and quintessentially square.

Many other anti-intellectual twists recur—all fitting and accumulating a dopey, Zen, lower-middle-class atmosphere. Such restraints would be annoying if we didn't sense a rage beneath this story. In order to write *Dog Soldiers,* to cast light from a distance upon the Vietnamese War, the author had to have a special empathy. We feel such an emotional connection throughout the book, but only glimpse its true source, I believe, in the last few pages. Hicks has survived and denied everything, including his own exploded arm. He is trudging alone across the desert when he imagines a kid nearby.

The kid walked beside him, making him feel bad, making him feel like a kid himself.

"Whaddaya doin'?"

"Walking across this here."

"My father's got a rifle like that."

"You got no father and if you had he wouldn't have no rifle like that. . . ."

"Nobody calls me a liar."

"Yes, they do. All the time they do. You wait till you grow up, you'll have all the guns you want, all the dope and all the women."

"I could go for that, I guess. I'm gonna join the Marines. . . ."

"I know you," Hicks said. "I wish I didn't but I do. You better do something about the way you cringe and whine. . . . For one thing it makes you weaker. For another nobody gives a shit. Who are you whining *to*? People? They don't care."

In *Dog Soldiers,* Stone re-creates an orphan's world where the worst can arrive any time out of nowhere. His precise realism is the art of a storyteller who doesn't want to be caught making up lies. Here—as in his fine first novel, *A Hall of Mirrors*—the author remains in the background. I suspect Stone has an orphan's faith in classical narration: mere authorial talk will weaken the author without moving his readers. Let the tale tell itself as clearly and horribly as possible. Let everyone feel how painful it can be.

Stone writes about misfits because he shares their vision and understands their self-destructiveness. Yet higher-ups are always implicated. In *A Hall of Mirrors,* a Southern tycoon tries to use a drifter to incite a race riot. In *Dog Soldiers,* "superiors" use the brutalized to wreak further brutality. Thus, although the majority of readers are not drug addicts or thugs or Marines or orphans, these dog soldiers cannot be patronized. There is an intellectual in the novel who patronizes the other characters at his own peril. He wants to write "something honest and real about the heroin scene" but first feels he should shoot up a couple of times. Hicks intentionally overdoses the man. For revenge? Manhood? Laughs? Our Vietnam veteran merely says: "Hue City. . . . We had guys who were dead the day they hit that place. In the morning they were in Hawaii, in the afternoon they were dead."

Robert Stone invites us to participate in Vietnam by way of story. His is not just a story of facile violence and easy moralism. *Dog Soldiers* brings the war home, then leaves it here.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles that have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Because of space limitations we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*

—EDITOR

In a recent article, (THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Summer 1975) "The Promise of Dirty Words," Professor John Sisk referred several times to a short essay of mine that appeared originally on the Op-Ed page of the *New York Times*. I am grateful for Professor Sisk's sympathy with my view that obscene language is implicitly exploitative and sadistic—especially toward women, and for his own enlightening and original perspective on the subject, but I did want to point out that my position as a result of that piece is not nearly as embattled as he suggests.

The mail that followed the piece's appearance in the *Times* was, for the most part, extremely favorable. Some of it, to be sure, came from those "Nixon-Agnew-Mitchell hard-line Victorians" Professor Sisk suspected would rally to my side for the wrong reasons. But a surprisingly large number of letters came from teachers, writers, editors, and members of the women's movement, offering sophisticated, and in two instances, disarmingly contrite, agreement.

I should also report that students who at first strongly resisted my interpretation of obscene words were, once they began to examine the origins and imagery of these words, easily persuaded to my thesis; which is not, of course, that such words should never be used (they do, as Professor Sisk so effectively illustrated, have a cathartic function in the language), but rather that the underlying intention of obscene words, and obscenity in general, should not be overlooked or interpreted as ignorantly and carelessly as it has been recently on both sides of the censorship question.

When young celebrants of the underground press, for example, predict happily that a time will come when nothing will be considered "obscene," one can only regret the clumsiness of their definitions and analogies. A time will come when exploitative, depersonalizing sexual behavior will not be distinguished from any other sexual behavior? And what about nonsexual behavior in the new Utopia? Are no distinctions to be made there either?

Conversely, when "Nixon-Agnew-Mitchell hard-line Victorians" proclaim their hatred of obscenity ("So long as I am in the White House," Richard Nixon said in 1970, "there will be no relaxation of the national effort to control and eliminate smut from our national life."), one can only wish that they, too, had more talent for definition and analogy; could see the likeness between one kind of smut and another; had realized, for example, that what makes *sex* "dirty"—the exploitative intention, the stunted imagination, the absence of affect and empathy, is remarkably similar to what makes politics "dirty."

BARBARA LAWRENCE
State University of New York
Old Westbury, Long Island

* * *

Please accept a comment from one of your appreciative though nonscholarly subscribers. I usually enjoy the articles under the rubric REAPPRAISALS, but Leon Edel on Thoreau in the Spring 1975 issue leaves me so dissatisfied that I am compelled to speak. Did he really come to the heart of what he calls the mystery of Walden? Did he use the right tool to help his thinking? A sort of Procrustean method that he calls literary psychology, it reduces the twenty-seven year-old Thoreau to an egocentric, narcissistic mother-attached fellow securing his freedom at the expense of others, in fact, a humbug who went to Walden because he was a civic and social failure. And so, one statement of the question, "Why did Thoreau *really* go to Walden?" is answered by raking over the empty nut shells of his personal history and psychology. But Mr. Edel properly restates the question, arousing our hope and interest: "What imperious demand of his imagination and inner being was he following when he went to Walden?"

This phrasing of the question seems really to point toward an elucidation of the mystery. But no elucidation follows, only more vain fumbling among the dry shells and the surprising comment that "out of all the little things observed" Thoreau built the myth of himself.

In frustration I turn to Thoreau himself, to Emerson, who knew Thoreau as well as anybody did, I suppose, and to whatever there is in my own imagination and inner being which corresponds to that imperious demand in Thoreau.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There was more to Thoreau than was found between his hat and his shoes. Was not this more the source of that demand on him to find and inhabit his wilderness? To obey and "see if he could not learn what it had to teach"? Isn't this the heart of the mystery of Walden, in fact, the heart of The Mystery, the strange ways of the creative spirit at work in the being of a responsive man? Emerson, whose words spoken at Thoreau's funeral were not by strict definition a eulogy, since he did not omit the warts, spoke of "the superiority that shone in Thoreau's simple, hidden life." There was an excellent wisdom in him, an unsleeping insight, which Emerson called Thoreau's "muse and genius," saying it ruled his life. Elsewhere Emerson called this imperious ruling force Power. It needs no means. All that was required was at hand; for wilderness a small wooded pond, for agent an attentive, observant man whose fraudulence and damn rascality were no hindrance to the making of a myth and the writing of a book for the world.

If I have misread Mr. Edel, I am sorry. I had to write. This is the way I see it.

ELAINE W. COGSWELL
Berkeley, California

Mr. Leon Edel presents an interesting view of Thoreau in his article, "Walden: The Myth and the Mystery," but one that's open to question. He much of the fire as the cause of antipathy between Thoreau and the townspeople. But it was a a deep-seated antipathy of long standing. (Mr. Edel seems to be aware of this but doesn't stress it enough.) Thoreau was a man who went his own way and "did his own thing," to use Emerson's words in another connection. He was a nonconformist, an individualist. He didn't hold a full-time job or go to church. He was a maverick, a loner, a man who kept his own counsel. He was not an upstanding citizen, which was especially damning in a Harvard graduate, from whom better things were expected. If he had in other ways been respectable, the fire would not have been held against him to that extent. It would have been regarded as an aberration, while in Thoreau's case it served to confirm what the townspeople already believed, that he was an idle, worthless fellow from whom no good could come. In this context the fire no doubt intensified the antipathy, but it could not of itself have been the main cause.

Another point. Why is it so difficult to believe Thoreau went to Walden for the reason he gives—to confront life? Why attribute it wholly to a *negative* cause—to a reaction—to his being irked at the townsmen over a fire? Thoreau had had a tendency toward high-mindedness even from the beginning. He had been inspired by Emerson's views even to the point of imitating Emerson's manner. Why, then, doubt that he might have gone to Walden at least *partly* for the reason he gives? Wasn't it in keeping with his development up to that point, and wouldn't it continue in that direction afterwards? But Mr. Edel says it was because of the resentment of the townspeople over a fire. In the light of all we know of Thoreau's life from beginning to end, which seems more probable, that he went to Walden for the reason Mr. Edel gives, or for the reason he himself gives?

Mr. Edel takes Thoreau to task for not living the severely rigorous life at Walden that his writings seemed to indicate he should have. He came into town, he had visitors, he used an ax, he dismantled and reassembled a shanty, and so on. But I think this is a misreading of Thoreau's purpose in going to Walden: it makes that purpose to be primarily a *physical* confrontation. If there had been nothing more to it than that, he would have been no different from those who go into the woods to rough it for a while. Many have done so, and some have recorded their experiences, but what they have written was far from being a *Walden*, even though it was graphic and exciting. I submit Thoreau's purpose was to confront life primarily in its *moral and spiritual* aspects, not in its physical. He didn't go there to live like neolithic man with all his handicaps. Only such a view as that would fault Thoreau for using an ax, coming into town, dismantling and reassembling a shanty; which probably explains why he later deleted the subtitle, *Life in the Woods*, from the book: it gave some people the wrong notion of why he had gone there.

One of Thoreau's chief precepts was, "Simplify, Simplify." In what way would it have been a simplification for him to make his own ax when there was an ax ready-made, or to hew his own lumber where there was lumber ready at hand? To which Mr. Edel might retort, how was it a simplification for him to live at Walden when his parents had a home in town? But it was precisely at this point that living at home became a hindrance. He had some thinking to do—he wished to know the meaning and purpose of life, and for this he needed more solitude than life at home afforded. And so he moved somewhat away, without at the same time cutting himself off altogether, since his intention was not to live like a hermit, but to retreat to a place where he had most of his time to himself to think things out.

Did Thoreau's going to Walden commit him to cut himself off from all company for the next

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

two years? If a man tells us solitude is important in his life, shall we call him a liar if we find him conversing with someone? Such a view drives the thing into the ground and makes it an absurdity. It's like calling a man a myth-maker because he tells us he likes chocolate cake and we find he doesn't eat it three meals a day. Why do we insist on this kind of absolutism in the case of Thoreau and no one else? I suspect it's because he holds up for us such high standards—we delight in pointing out instances where he himself didn't seem to live up to them; and also because we begrudge his having lived up to them so much better than we.

Surely at Walden Thoreau had the larger part of each day to himself—to think, to ponder, to meditate, either while sitting in his hut or exploring the pond and nearby woods. Surely he had the leisure and solitude to do what he had come to do, without at the same time cutting himself off altogether. And not only did he do so on the whole successfully, but out of it came a work whose affect will be felt for centuries.

JOHN SHIRIGIAN
Detroit Institute of Technology
Detroit, Michigan

MR. EDEL replies: The purpose of my article on Thoreau was to put in greater order, than hitherto, the facts as I found them relating to Thoreau's going to Walden. It is good for biography to ask such questions in each generation—to take a further look at our myths. I do not think that my method was "Procrustean"—since it included all the facts available. Nor did I call Thoreau "egocentric, narcissistic mother-attached." These diagnostic terms are used by Mrs. Cogswell, but I think they may be reasonably accurate in the light of the evidence. I would argue, however, that it is not "reductive" to show a personage "warts and all," so long as we show what that personage achieved *in spite of* his warts or disabilities. The whole point of my essay—as indeed of all my writings—has been to portray the struggles of our artists and myth-makers, the hardships they overcome, the inner turmoil which they transcend, and out of which they are able to create. In the case of Thoreau, it had seemed to me that there was a glossing over of his emotional difficulties in favor of his own rationalizations.

As for Mr. Shirigian's letter, I did not take Thoreau to task for not living the severely rigorous life at Walden he claimed: I was merely trying to show that his life was, in part, a fantasy, which became a remarkable book; but that he was blind to certain kinds of realities. I think Mr. Shirigian commits the fault of taking Thoreau's rationalizations as scripture instead of looking at them analytically. In a word, my biographical studies are a plea for an analytical approach to the evidence, and my goal is to discover how individuals triumph over the existential fact, refusing to surrender to anguish and depression, and the indignities that life heaps upon so many creative persons, and in the end triumphing by writing a book, or painting a picture.

Thoreau was a very interesting example of this kind of struggle, and he created an American myth. In the quest for the human reality, which is the deepest quest of biography, one learns to ask questions, and to overcome our constant desire to close our eyes to the truths of human struggle and human achievement.

* * *

Richard Rodriquez's *The New Scholarship Boy* (Winter 1974/75) is as misleading as it is disturbing. It is misleading because nonminority academicians may be led to believe that his experience is typical of all scholars from ethnic minorities. It is disturbing because it implies that his inability to cope with his changes in life-style is a common disability.

The Chicano from the Los Angeles barrio differs significantly from the Latino of San Francisco's Mission District, or the blacks in Watts. The nonminority reader of Rodriquez's article could conclude that all Mexican-Americans are nonliterate, or even that all members of ethnic minorities are nonliterate.

He says, "Those of us who have been scholarship boys know in our bones that our education has exacted a large price in exchange for the large benefits it has conferred upon us." I believe this is true only if the individual lets it be so. One culture does not necessarily preclude another. The minority scholar need not sacrifice what is familiar and comfortable for the rarified air of academe.

If there is resentment from his parents, it may be because he has chosen to exchange his identity for an Anglo one: Latin Americans place a great deal of importance on "educaión" which is not education in the English sense of the word, but an ineffable quality of respect for tradition, respect for one's family, and a courtesy more exact than any dictated by Emily Post. Sacrificing "educación" for a college degree would signal a rejection of his parents; certainly cause for distrust.

In the course of study, one may become alienated from one's family. However, this is a phase to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be outgrown and left behind. Unless the individual chooses to be apart, he need not be.

I am completely fluent in Spanish: my parents always spoke it at home and my mother insisted that I study it in high school. I speak English without a trace of accent: this was the language I learned in school. I take as much pleasure from reading Plato in the original Greek, as reading Asturias in Spanish or Henry James in English.

When I visit my parents, we don't waste our valuable time together "interviewing" each other. Why? Because my family is precious to me in a different way than are my books, or my *New Yorker*.

Mr. Rodriquez must realize that the individual is multifaceted, and must put all the facets in perspective. If he is truly attached to the rich culture of his childhood, he should pause to consider how *his* children will regard their background: will they remember as he does the joyous warmth of childhood, or merely recall a dry imitation of an Anglo-Saxon stereotyped household.

A full and meaningful life is a synthesis of many factors, but it must begin with a fundamental understanding of oneself, acceptance of one's roots, and a clear perception of one's direction. To love another culture is not to lose one's own.

Rosemarie T. Pegueros
Los Angeles, California

Mr. Rodriguez replies: Ms. Pegueros worries more than I do that the reader of my essay may find something peculiarly Mexican or ethnic about my experiences. Any reader who reaches such a conclusion would do so by misreading what I have written. In my article, I carefully stated that my life as the son of slightly literate parents and as a graduate student of English Renaissance literature only dramatically clarifies dilemmas many persons from a variety of social, racial, and economic groups face as well. (The particular advantage I have had as a "scholarship boy" has been that the cultural impact of my education has never been easy to forget—though for that reason, I suppose, the temptation has been great to repress a possible sense of loss and alienation with a shower of enthusiasm for my new skills.)

Obviously, it is with our appraisals of academic culture's impact that Ms. Pegueros and I most seriously disagree. She seems to think that as a student one holds onto one's older, nonacademic culture as long as one wants to, that my own separation from my parents' culture need not have happened as long as I could have put away my academic skills and interests when I returned home. My sense of academic culture or of any culture is that, by definition, its influence is vast and shapes our most subtle responses to experience. To reiterate the major, if also the most difficult, point I made in my essay: when I entered the classroom and learned how to read, the new skill brought the capacity to respond differently to my reality. I did not need a Walter Ong or a Marshall McLuhan when I was still a young reader to tell me that I was becoming very different from my parents as a result of my literacy—although later such writers would clarify for me the dimensions of my alteration. I was able to guess a great deal when I looked up from my books and papers to hear the distant and busy sounds of voices from the family kitchen.

For me to assert today that I can *simply* return home after reading Plato would trivialize both the culture my parents preserve and the experience of reading Plato. I return home, yes; but I return home troubled. What should be my proper relationship with those who, by inclination or necessity, do not experience life as abstractly as do I? When should I respect the integrity of their culture—now so very attractive precisely because it is seen from the university library—by remaining silent about what I understand? When should I try to alter their culture?

In my essay, I criticized those "third world intellectuals" who changed my parents' sense of racial identity because I felt that most of them didn't carefully notice how different their educations had made them from those they *represented*. I criticized them without proposing any easy alternatives. There is no one answer suitable for all the relationships and obligations we have after we leave the library. What I wanted my reader to hear was only a call for more sensitivity about the dynamics of the problem.

The issue I point to here is not simply one with political significance, though faced as I am with the strange benefits of Affirmative Action programs and the responsibility to represent the culture of my past as an intellectual, it was in that context that the problem seemed most obvious. My adopted culture influences my life in ways public and private; the question about my relationship to the entire society of lower-class Mexican-Americans who are not literate suggests a corresponding question about my relationship to my body and emotions. And the issue I point to is an ancient one. My dilemma only repeats the struggle of the intellectual when he faces the space between his culture of mind and isolation and the cultures of those who live lives more immediate and communal. Plato troubled over the space between act and idea and tried to bridge it with his notion of the philosopher king—a vision which in its ideality tells us much about the problem it tried to solve.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Index to Volume 44

Pagination of the volume is divided as follows: Winter, 1-168; Spring, 168-344; Summer, 345-520; Autumn, 521-696. Listed in *Readers Guide*.

Adams, Robert M., **Machiavelli Now and Here: An Essay for the First World,** 365
American Eves in American Edens, *Judith Fryer,* 78
Aristides, **A Literary Mafia?** (Life and Letters), 182; **Sex and the Professors** (Life and Letters), 357; **Boutique America!** (Life and Letters), 533
Art of the Medieval Mystery Play, The (Revolving Bookstand), *Martin Stevens,* 151
Assassin's Fatal Error, The (Poem), *Lawrence Raab,* 125

Babe on Balance, The (Portrait), *Marshall Smelser,* 299
Bakunin Revivified (Revolving Bookstand), *George Woodcock,* 512
Bellow, Saul, **Starting Out in Chicago,** 71
Between the Window and the Mirror (Revolving Bookstand), *William F. Claire,* 156
Beyond Abstraction (Revolving Bookstand), *David Grene,* 509
Beyond Pigs and Bunnies: The New Animator's Art, *John Hubley,* 213
Black Is Computable (Revolving Bookstand), *Harry N. Scheiber,* 656
Boutique America! (Life and Letters), *Aristides,* 533
Bouwsma, William J., **Models of the Educated Man,** 195
Brown, Frederick, **The Metamorphosis of Virtue** (Revolving Bookstand), 504

Canal, The (Poem), *Greg Kuzma,* 68
Claim Area (Poem), *John Ditsky,* 180
Claire, William F., **Between the Window and the Mirror** (Revolving Bookstand), 156
Climbing the Mountain (Poem), *Susan Fromberg Schaeffer,* 457
Clio and the Changing Fashions: Some Patterns in Current American Historiography (Revolving Bookstand), *Michael Kammen,* 484
Coles, Robert, **Varieties of Greed** (Revolving Bookstand), 314
Conservative Imagination: Michael Oakeshott, The, *Gertrude Himmelfarb,* 405
Conundrum of Modern Africa, The (Revolving Bookstand), *S. Jay Walker,* 157
Convergence of the Law School and the University, The, *Paul A. Samuelson,* 256

Dannhauser, Werner J., **Leo Strauss: Becoming Naïve Again** (Teaching), 636
Dartmoor (Poem), *Lawrence Raab,* 124
Days With Diaghilev, *Nicolas Nabokov,* 620
Dear Memory (Poem), *I. A. Richards,* 652
Death in a Strange Land (Poem), *D. J. Enright,* 560
Despairing Optimist, The, *René Dubos,* 8, 174, 350, 528
Dillon, Wilton S., **Shadowy Dramas** (Revolving Bookstand), 515
Ditsky, John, **Claim Area** (Poem), 180
Donald, David Herbert, **Tribute** (Revolving Bookstand), 508
Double-Header (Poem), *John Stone,* 382
Down the Lane (Revolving Bookstand), *Joseph Whitehill,* 162
Dubos, René, The Despairing Optimist, 8, 174, 350, 528
Dust (Poem), *Susan Snively,* 618
Dutiful Daughter (Revolving Bookstand), *Sir William Haley,* 332

Edel, Leon, **Walden: The Myth and the Mystery** (Reappraisals), 272
Elliott, George P., **The Way We Live Now** (Medicine), 127; **The Theater of Honesty** (Theater), 462
Enright, D. J., **Death in a Strange Land** (Poem), 560

Freund, Paul A., **The Great Disorder of Speech,** 541
Friedrich, Otto, **A Little Tour with Henry James** (Travel), 643
Fryer, Judith, **American Eves in American Edens,** 78

Gay, Ruth and Peter, **Musings in Munich,** 41
Gingerich, Owen, ed., **Science and Ethics: From *The Nature of Scientific Discovery,*** 439
Going Home Again: The New American Scholarship Boy, *Richard Rodriquez,* 15
Gold, Barbara, **The Mysteries of Marcel** (Revolving Bookstand), 142
Gould, Laurence M., **On the Ice** (Revolving Bookstand), 327
Graff, Gerald, **Yvor Winters of Stanford** (Teaching), 291
Great Disorder of Speech, The, *Paul A. Freund,* 541
Greed and the Modern Wealth Machine (Revolving Bookstand), *James Ridgeway,* 160

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Grene, David, **Beyond Abstraction** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 509
Guarding the Constitution: The Aftermath of Watergate (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Lewis J. Paper,* 164

Haley, William, **Dutiful Daughter** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 332; **Plain Jane** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 684
Hands (POEM), *Greg Kuzma,* 642
Hazo, Samuel, **The Worst Dancers Watch Their Feet** (Poem), 69
Heinz Hartmann and the "Conflict-Free Sphere" (REAPPRAISALS), *H. Stuart Hughes,* 101
Himmelfarb, Gertrude, **The Conservative Imagination: Michael Oakeshott,** 405
Hubley, John, **Beyond Pigs and Bunnies: The New Animator's Art,** 213
Hughes, H. Stuart, **Heinz Hartmann and the "Conflict-Free Sphere"** (REAPPRAISALS), 101

If This Be Treason: Translation and Its Possibilities, *Gregory Rabassa,* 29

Jennings, Kate, **10/11** (Poem), 100

Kammen, Michael, **Clio and the Changing Fashions: Some Patterns in Current American Historiography** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 484
Kaplan, Harold, **The Muscle of History** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 499
Kaplan, Justin, **The Terror After Death** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 673
Kateb, George, **Love-Hate Relation** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 306
Kauffmann, Stanley, **The Stages of Joseph Papp** (THEATER), 110
Kessler, Jascha, **On a Winged Talisman, Roman, Bronze, That I Gave My Friend, A Token To Be Hung on His Key Chain** (Poem), 437
Klein, Jeffrey, **The Vietnam Connection** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 686
Kuzma, Greg, **The Canal** (Poem), 68, **Hands** (Poem), 642

Larson, Charles, R., **Waiting for Emily** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 681
Leibowitz, Herbert, **Stoking the Oedipal Furnace: Edward Dahlberg's *Because I Was Flesh*** (REAPPRAISALS), 473
Leo Strauss: Becoming Naïve Again (TEACHING), *Werner J. Dannhauser,* 636
LIFE AND LETTERS: **A Literary Mafia?,** *Aristides,* 182; **Sex and the Professors,** *Aristides,* 357; **Boutique America!,** *Aristides,* 533
Literary Mafia?, A (LIFE AND LETTERS), *Aristides,* 182
Little Tour with Henry James, A. (TRAVEL), *Otto Friedrich,* 643
Love-Hate Relation (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *George Kateb,* 306
Lynn, Kenneth S., **Starting Out in the Twenties** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 677

MacCann, Richard Dyer, **Televising Congress** (TELEVISION), 466
Machiavelli Now and Here: An Essay for the First World, *Robert M. Adams,* 365
Marx, Robert, **The Operatic Brecht** (MUSIC), 283
MEDICINE: **The Way We Live Now,** *George P. Elliott,* 127
Meeker, Joseph W., **The Revised New Biological Syllabus** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 676
Metamorphosis of Virtue, The (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Frederick Brown,* 504
Mill and Company (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Leon Wieseltier,* 336
Mme de Staël and the Woman of Genius, *Ellen Moers,* 225
Models of the Educated Man, *William J. Bouwsma,* 195
Moers, Ellen, **Mme de Staël and the Woman of Genius,** 225
Morgan, Frederick, **Philosophical Investigations** (Poem), 421
Moynihan, Daniel P., **Presenting the American Case,** 564
Muscle of History, The (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Harold Kaplan,* 499
MUSIC: **The Operatic Brecht,** *Robert Marx,* 283
Musings in Munich, *Ruth and Peter Gay,* 41
Mysteries of Marcel, The (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Barbara Gold,* 142

Nabokov, Nicolas, **Days with Diaghilev,** 620
Nemerov, Howard, **Speculation** (Poem), 40; **Playing Skittles** (Poem), 224; **Thoughts on First Passing the Hundredth Page of *Finnegans Wake*** (REAPPRAISALS), 653
News from the Underworld (Poem), *John Updike,* 584
Nichols, William, **This Old "ism"** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 310
Niflis, Michael, **Rabbit** (Poem), 282

On a Winged Talisman, Roman, Bronze, That I Gave My Friend, A Token To Be Hung on His Key Chain (Poem), *Jascha Kessler,* 437
On the Ice (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Laurence Gould,* 327
Operatic Brecht, The (MUSIC), *Robert Marx,* 283
Out of Sight—Out of Mind (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Steven Schlossman,* 679

Palmer, Allison R., **Serendipity and the Changing Face of the Earth,** 242
Paper, Lewis J., **Guarding the Constitution: The Aftermath of Watergate** (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), 164

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Philosophical Investigations (Poem), *Frederick Morgan,* 421
Plain Jane (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *William Haley,* 684
Playing Skittles (Poem), *Howard Nemerov,* 224
Politics and Historical Criticism (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Peter Shaw,* 496
Popular Culture All Around Us, *Sonya Rudikoff,* 604
PORTRAIT: **The Babe on Balance,** *Marshall Smelser,* 299
Presenting the American Case, *Daniel P. Moynihan,* 564
Promise of Dirty Words, The, *John P. Sisk,* 385

Raab, Lawrence, **Dartmoor** (Poem), 124; **The Assassin's Fatal Error** (Poem), 125
Rabassa, Gregory, **If This Be Treason: Translation and Its Possibilities,** 29
Rabbit (Poem), *Michael Niflis,* 282
READER REPLIES, THE, 167, 339, 518, 689
REAPPRAISALS: **Heinz Hartmann and the "Conflict-Free Sphere,"** *H. Stuart Hughes,* 101; **Walden: The Myth and the Mystery,** *Leon Edel,* 272; **Stoking the Oedipal Furnace: Edward Dahlberg's *Because I Was Flesh,*** *Herbert Leibowitz,* 473; **Thoughts on First Passing the Hundredth Page of *Finnegans Wake,*** *Howard Nemerov,* 653
Revised New Biological Syllabus, The (REVOLVING BOOKSTAND), *Joseph P. Meeker,* 676
REVOLVING BOOKSTAND, THE, 142, 306, 484, 656
The Mysteries of Marcel, *Barbara Gold,* 142, review of *Marcel Duchamp: The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* by John Golding, *Marcel Duchamp in Perspective* edited by Joseph Masheck, and *Marcel Duchamp* edited by Anne d'Harnoncourt and Kynaston McShine.
Art of the Medieval Mystery Play, The, *Martin Stevens,* 151, review of *The Construction of the Wakefield Cycle* by John Gardner.
Between the Window and the Mirror, *William F. Claire,* 156, review of *The Poet's Story, An Anthology of Stories* edited by Howard Moss.
The Conundrum of Modern Africa, *S. Jay Walker,* 157, review of *Africa Since 1857* by Robin Hallett.
Greed and the Modern Health Machine, *James Ridgeway,* 160, review of *Blue Cross. What Went Wrong?* by Sylvia Law.
Down the Lane, *Joseph Whitehill,* 162, review of *The Political Criminal. The Problem of Morality and Crime* by Stephen Schafer.
Guarding the Constitution: The Aftermath of Watergate, *Lewis J. Paper,* 164, review of *The Palace Guard* by Dan Rather and Paul Gates.
Love-Hate Relation, *George Kateb,* 306, review of *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* by Robert Caro.
This Old "ism," *William Nichols,* 310, review of *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* by Theodore Rosengarten.
Varities of Greed, *Robert Coles,* 314, review of *Greedy Institutions* by Lewis Coser.
On the Ice, *Laurence M. Gould,* 327, review of *Edge of the World* by Charles Neider.
The Science of Mythography, *Richard Slotkin,* 330, review of *The Rise of Modern Mythology 1680-1860* by Burton Feldman and Robert D. Richardson, Jr.
Dutiful Daughter, *William Haley,* 332, review of *Natalie Herzen: Daughter of a Revolutionary* edited with an introduction by Michael Confino.
Mill and Company, *Leon Wieseltier,* 336, review of *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill* by Gertrude Himmelfarb.
Clio and the Changing Fashions: Some Patterns in Current American Historiography, *Michael Kammen,* 484.
Politics and Historical Criticism, *Peter Shaw,* 496, review of *Versions of the Past. The Historical Imagination in American Fiction* by Harry B. Henderson III.
The Muscle of History, *Harold Kaplan,* 499, review of *The Seventh Hero. Thomas Carlyle and the Theory of Radical Activism* by Philip Rosenberg.
The Metamorphosis of Virtue, *Frederick Brown,* 504, review of *Diderot: The Virtue of a Philosopher* by Carol Blum.
Tribute, *David Herbert Donald,* 508, review of *The Hofstadter Aegis: A Memorial* edited by Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick.
Beyond Abstraction, *David Grene,* 509, review of *Towards Greek Tragedy: Drama, Myth and Society* by Brian Vickers.
Bakunin Revivified, *George Woodcock,* 512, review of *Bakunin: The Father of Anarchism* by Anthony Masters and *The Anarchist Collectives* edited by Sam Dolgoff.
Shadowy Dramas, *Wilton S. Dillon,* 515, review of *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society* by Victor Turner.
Black Is Computable, *Harry N. Scheiber,* 656, review of *Time on the Cross* by Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman.
The Terror After Death, *Justin Kaplan,* 673, review of *Truth to Life. The Art of Biography in the Nineteenth Century* by A. O. J. Cockshut.
The Revised New Biological Syllabus, *Joseph P. Meeker,* 676, review of *36 Lectures in Biology* by Salvador E. Luria.
Starting out in the Twenties, *Kenneth S. Lynn,* 677, review of *Edmund Wilson. The Twenties* edited with an introduction by Leon Edel.
Out of Sight—Out of Mind, *Steven Schlossman,* 679, review of *Our Kindly Parent . . . The State* by Patrick T. Murphy.
Waiting For Emily, *Charles R. Larson,* 681, review of *The Life of Emily Dickinson* by Richard B. Sewall.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Plain Jane, *William Haley,* 684, review of *Jane Austen* by Douglas Bush.
The Vietnam Connection, *Jeffrey Klein,* 686, review of *Dog Soldiers* by Robert Stone.
Richards, I. A., **Dear Memory** (Poem), 652
Ridgeway, James, **Greed and the Modern Health Machine** (Revolving Bookstand), 160
Rodriquez, Richard, **Going Home Again: The New American Scholarship Boy,** 15
Rovere, Richard H., **Walter Lippman,** 585
Rudikoff, Sonya, **Popular Culture All Around Us,** 604

Samuelson, Paul A., **The Convergence of the Law School and the University,** 256
Schaeffer, Susan Fromberg, **Climbing the Mountain** (Poem), 457
Scheiber, Harry N., **Black Is Computable** (Revolving Bookstand), 656
Schlossman, Steven, **Out of Sight—Out of Mind** (Revolving Bookstand), 679
Science and Ethics, From *The Nature of Scientific Discovery,* *Owen Gingerich,* ed., 439
Science and Mythology, The (Revolving Bookstand), *Richard Slotkin,* 330
Serendipity and the Changing Face of the Earth, *Allison R. Palmer,* 242
Sex and the Professors (Life and Letters), *Aristides,* 357
Shadowy Dramas (Revolving Bookstand), *Wilton S. Dillon,* 515
Shaw, Peter, **Politics and Historical Criticism** (Revolving Bookstand), 496
Sisk, John P., **The Promise of Dirty Words,** 385
Slotkin, Richard, **The Science of Mythology** (Revolving Bookstand), 330
Smelser, Marshall, **The Babe on Balance** (Portrait), 299
Snively, Susan, **Dust** (Poem), 618
Speculation (Poem), *Howard Nemerov,* 40
Stafford, William, **Why I Keep a Journal** (Poem), 255
Stages of Joseph Papp, The (Theater), *Stanley Kauffmann,* 110
Starting Out in Chicago, *Saul Bellow,* 71
Starting Out in the Twenties (Revolving Bookstand), Kenneth S. Lynn, 677
Stevens, Martin, **The Art of the Medieval Mystery Play** (Revolving Bookstand), 151
Stoking the Oedipal Furnace: Edward Dahlberg's *Because I Was Flesh* (Reappraisals), *Herbert Leibowitz,* 473
Stone, John, **Double-Header** (Poem), 382

Teaching: **Yvor Winters of Stanford,** *Gerald Graff,* 291; **Leo Strauss: Becoming Naïve Again,** *Werner Dannhauser,* 636
Televising Congress (Television), *Richard Dyer MacCann,* 466
Television: **Televising Congress,** *Richard Dyer MacCann,* 466
10/11 (Poem), *Kate Jennings,* 100
Terror After Death, The (Revolving Bookstand), *Justin Kaplan,* 673
Theater of Honesty, The (Theater), *George P. Elliott,* 462
Theater: **The Stages of Joseph Papp,** *Stanley Kauffmann,* 110; **The Theater of Honesty,** *George P. Elliott,* 462
Thoughts on First Passing the Hundredth Page of *Finnegans Wake* (Reappraisals), *Howard Nemerov,* 653
This Old "ism" (Revolving Bookstand), *William Nichols,* 310
Travel: **A Little Tour with Henry James,** *Otto Friedrich,* 643
Tribute (Revolving Bookstand), *David Herbert Donald,* 508
Trilling, Lionel, **The Uncertain Future of the Humanistic Educational Ideal,** 52

Uncertain Future of the Humanistic Educational Ideal, The, *Lionel Trilling,* 52
Under the Crunch: Letter from England, *Renee Winegarten,* 424
Updike, John, **News from the Underworld** (Poem), 584

Varieties of Greed (Revolving Bookstand), *Robert Coles,* 314
Vietnam Connection, The (Revolving Bookstand), *Jeffrey Klein,* 686

Waiting for Emily (Revolving Bookstand), *Charles R. Larson,* 681
Walden: The Myth and the Mystery (Reappraisals), *Leon Edel,* 272
Walter Lippman, *Richard H. Rovere,* 585
Walker, S. Jay, **The Conundrum of Modern Africa** (Revolving Bookstand), 157
Way We Live Now, The (Medicine), *George P. Elliott,* 127
Whitehill, Joseph, **Down the Lane** (Revolving Bookstand), 162
Why I Keep a Journal (Poem), *William Stafford,* 255
Wieseltier, Leon, **Mill and Company** (Revolving Bookstand), 336
Winegarten, Renee, **Under the Crunch: Letter from England,** 424
Woodcock, George, **Bakunin Revivified** (Revolving Bookstand), 512
Worst Dancers Watch Their Feet, The (Poem), *Samuel Hazo,* 69

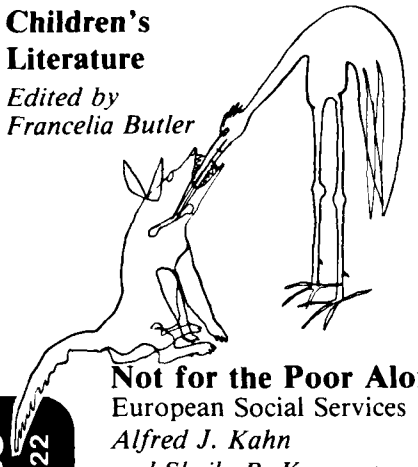
Yvor Winters of Stanford (Teaching), *Gerald Graff,* 291

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fall 75 Temple University Press Philadelphia, Pa. 19122

Children's Literature

Edited by Francelia Butler



This unrivalled annual includes the best original articles — as well as reviews, review essays, and suggested areas for research — in perhaps the most exciting area of interdisciplinary studies today. Complete tables of contents and information on standing orders are available on request. Reprints of Vols. I, II, III: September. Vol. IV: December.

256 pp. Cloth $15.00 Paper $4.95

Not for the Poor Alone

European Social Services

Alfred J. Kahn and Sheila B. Kamerman

This is a book about social services for *the average citizen.* American observers report on ten programs for average people, newborn to aged, in five northern European countries. The result is a vivid first-hand account of innovative experiments in housing, health, day care, school meals, and other social services. The authors examine both the social policy of the government and the human consequences of the programs and raise questions about their implications for the United States.

200 pp. Cloth $10.00 November

Street Names of Philadelphia

Robert I. Alotta

From Abbottsford Avenue to Zoological Street, through almost 1000 thoroughfares and byways, this book shows Philadelphians commemorating their leaders, Indian chiefs and tribes, important events, things that grow, precious stones, former home towns, even housepainters. 18 pages of unusual photographs.

168 pp. Cloth $10.00 October

Creativity in Social Work

Selected Writings of Lydia Rapoport

Edited by Sanford N. Katz

Introduction by Carol H. Meyer

Foreword by Dame Eileen Younghusband

The theory and practice of an internationally respected social worker—in crisis intervention, short-term therapy, family planning, and other areas—are amply documented in this new collection of Lydia Rapoport's writings.

280 pp. Cloth $12.50 October

Radio Power

Propaganda and International Broadcasting

Julian Hale

Radio is a political weapon. Julian Hale traces its use from the Nazis to the BBC, with special attention to the communist ideological commitment and American ambivalence to propaganda, but also including the policies of the Third World, the churches, and the "freedom fighters." Essential for students of communications and diplomacy, as well as for amateur radio enthusiasts and compulsive knob-twiddlers.

200 pp. Cloth $12.50 September

Is the Mexican Revolution Dead?

Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged

Edited by Stanley R. Ross

The best textbook on the Mexican Revolution now includes new essays by the most influential politicians and intellectuals of Mexico's last decade—Octavio Paz, Manuel Moreno Sánchez, Jesús Reyes Heroles, and Presidents Díaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverría.

384 pp. Cloth $12.50 Paper $3.95 September

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books from Tennessee

THE INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL OF MICHAL KALECKI
A Study in Economic Theory and Policy
by George R. Feiwel

"I've always thought Michal Kalecki one of the most interesting economists I've ever met, and the most vividly and stubbornly intelligent man I ever knew. George Feiwel has done economists a great favor and the subject a great service with this massive and illuminating study." — John Kenneth Galbraith

604 pages, $22.50

GHOSTS ALONG THE CUMBERLAND
Deathlore in the Kentucky Foothills
by William Lynwood Montell

Using the techniques of the folklorist skilled in the uses of oral tradition, William Lynwood Montell captures a fascinating system of folk beliefs about death, burial, and the supernatural that until recently was commonly found in the south-central Kentucky region known as the Eastern Pennyroyal. *"Adds considerably to the area of folklore studies in the United States."* — Don Yoder

256 pages, $9.95

THE REAFIRMATION OF REPUBLICANISM
Eisenhower and the Eighty-Third Congress
by Gary W. Reichard

"This is the best work I have seen that deals with the Eisenhower period .... It should go far toward correcting the myths that pass for descriptions of his first two years in office." — Donald M. McCoy. A title in the Twentieth-Century America series, Dewey W. Grantham, General Editor.

320 pages, $14.95

The University of Tennessee Press
Knoxville 37916

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED